

**AFTER THE
BATTLE**

GERMAN AIR RAID SHELTERS



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Front Cover: Air raid shelters in Hannover. This shelter is of the so-called Winkel (angled) type, of which only two were built in Hannover. It stands in the former State Railways repair yard at Hannover-Leinhausen and was for the exclusive use of Reichsbahn personnel. (Michael Foedrowitz)

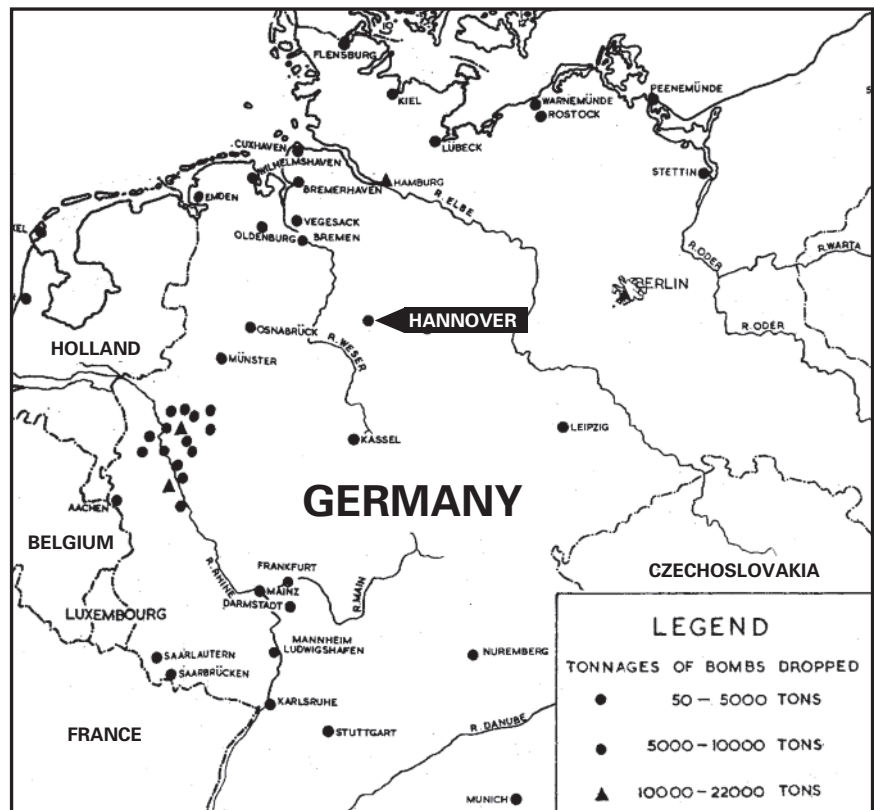
Centre Pages: The much more common type of shelter bunkers in Hannover were those for ordinary civilians, like this Type H 1 2 shelter in Diesterwegstrasse. (Michael Foedrowitz)

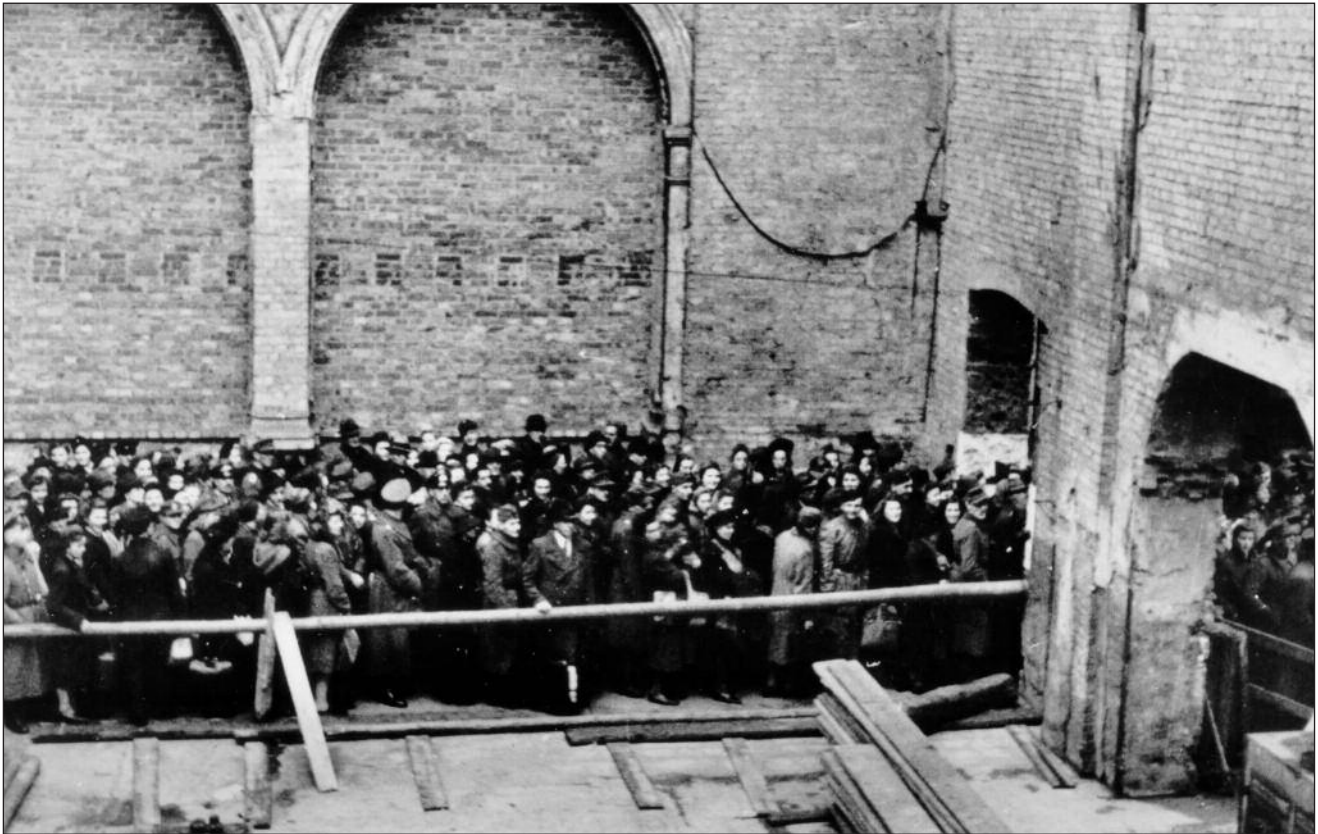
Back Cover: Emerging from the muddy waters of the River Plate, the *Admiral Graf Spee* rises from the dead. (Associated Press)

Photo Credits: AMF – Archiv Michael Foedrowitz; IWM – Imperial War Museum, London; USNA – US National Archives.



Above: Pferdestrasse, Hannover, the morning after a raid in 1943. (Historisches Museum Hannover) *Below:* In 1942-43, Hannover was one of the German cities, along with Bremen, Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Nuremberg and Mannheim, that had between 5,000 and 10,000 tons of bombs dropped on it by RAF Bomber Command. Only Hamburg, Berlin, Essen and Cologne received more tonnage.





When RAF Bomber Command began its bombing raids against German cities in 1940, the Reich government saw itself faced with the need to provide the population of its cities with adequate shelter where they could safely sit out the enemy bomber raids. This led to a huge building programme involving the construction of many thousands of large 'Luftschutzbunker' (LSB — air raid shelters) in all major towns and cities. In all, Germany built some 3,000 civilian air raid bunkers. To these must be added the special shelters built for factory workforces, railway personnel, hospitals and Wehrmacht units. As a representative example to present the story of air raid shelters in Germany we have chosen the city of Hannover. The twelfth-largest city in the country, it

had a population in 1940 of some 471,000. Home of several vital war industries — like the Hanomag (Hannoversche Maschinenbau AG) armaments plant, the Continental rubber factory, the Vereinigte Leichtmetallwerke steel works, and the Deurag-Nerag oil refinery — it ranked fifth on the list of prime industrial targets for the Allied bomber campaign. In all, Hannover suffered 125 air raids during the war. The city built 56 air raid shelters for its civilian population. Here, civilians queue up at the entrance to the underground air raid shelter at the Hannover Hauptbahnhof (main railway station) during an alert in 1943. The largest shelter in Hannover, it could accommodate up to 12,000 persons. (Historisches Museum Hannover)

AIR RAID SHELTERS IN HANNOVER

As Berlin felt the effects of the first RAF raids on August 26, 1940, the Nazi leadership became aware that it was unrealistic to suppose that British bombers could ever be prevented from overflying German territory. At the outbreak of war it was impossible to predict the reaction of the civil population to air raids. Accordingly, for reasons of internal politics and propaganda, a construction programme of air raid shelters was embarked upon; one which was to be not only the greatest building project of all time but also, and in contrast to the fortifications of all the belligerent nations, the only one in the history of the war to have successfully achieved its aim. At the beginning of the war, the estimated cost for air raid shelters alone amounted to 120 thousand million Reichsmarks, with the estimate for reinforced concrete put at 200 million cubic metres. Yet this construction programme was doomed to end in failure.

Following the set-back of the Battle of Britain and the failure to carry out Operation 'Seelöwe' — the plan to invade England in the autumn of 1940 — Hitler and the military command resolved to set about the building of air raid shelters. In September 1940, Hitler ordered the construction of the gigantic flak towers in Berlin whose heavy

barrage was intended to prevent enemy bombers from overflying the government quarters of the capital. On October 10, 1940, the so-called 'Führer-Sofortprogramm' (Führer Immediate Programme) was implemented to provide bomb-proof shelters for the population of the country's major cities. The pertaining definition of 'bomb-proof' was that the shelters (surface, underground, tower-shelters and tunnels) should be able to withstand bombs of up to 1,000kg and furthermore be gas-proof. As far as this building programme was concerned, Hitler saw himself challenged not only as a military expert but also as an architect. He personally drew numerous sketches, gave instructions for building and put forward proposals regarding the layout of accommodation and the method of construction.

It was a building programme not simply limited to bomb-proof shelters but one which also included splinter-proof structures able to resist falling rubble, as well as measures to reinforce cellars. It was to create so-called 'Wehrgemeinden' (defence districts) in cities with a population in excess of 100,000 and which were in danger from air raids; an example of this was Watenstedt-Salzgitter (Hermann Göring Reichswerke). Such cities had mostly been classified as Air Raid Pro-

By Michael Foedrowitz

tection Zones Category 1. Bunkers to protect the civilian population (Bunker des Selbstschutzes) were particularly planned for those districts where, due to the way the houses had been built, no cellars or other possibilities for shelter existed.

For organisational reasons and concerning the allocation of building materials and building criteria, other shelter programmes were combined with the Führer-Sofortprogramm: hospital bunkers and bunkers for 'mother and child' were developed in Berlin. In addition to shelters for the civil population, the German State Railways and the Post Office had their own programmes; still more were provided for factory workers and the various branches of the armed forces.

The whole Führer-Sofortprogramm was planned in three phases which differed from each other as far as the bunkers' resistance to bombs was concerned. Building techniques — especially steel reinforcement — were developed and the strength of the outer walls was increased. Thus a contest was started between English bombs and German concrete — a contest which from the outset was hopeless for the German side.



Nighttime flak with tracers during one of the 74 RAF night raids on Hannover. The Air Ministry directive to Bomber Command of February 14, 1942, which was the blueprint for attacks on German cities and removed all constraints on targeting, listed Hannover as one of the 13 primary industrial areas to be

attacked. The heaviest damage occurred between late September and mid-October 1943 when the RAF mounted four heavy night raids on the city (September 22/23 and 27/28 and October 8/9 and 18/19), despatching a total of 2,253 aircraft and dropping 8,339 tons of bombs. (AMF)

For Phase I, 61 cities were selected. Construction started nationwide in November 1940 with completion scheduled for July 1941. Preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union resulted in the loss of trucks and the withdrawal of army and air force construction troops: the building programme thus came to a standstill and deadlines were not met. Most of the shelters from Phase I were in service by the late autumn of 1941, the last early in 1942. Major construction projects such as the Atlantic Wall and the fortification of the U-boat bases delayed the building programme even further.

Phase II, originally intended for 51 cities but later reduced to 30, also fell behind schedule with some shelters not even completed by the end of the war. An additional programme ordered in May 1943 (in cities such as Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, which had been designated as Phase III) saw cities in Air Raid Protection Category 2 included in the programme but, due to problems of manpower and materials, the shelters took the form of tunnels, either deep underground or cut into the sides of hills.

To all intents and purposes the Führer-Sofortprogramm had ground to a halt by the autumn of 1943 and it was finally abandoned in the summer of 1944. Thereafter shelters could be erected only as an exceptional measure and as part of a so-called Mindestbauprogramm (Least-Option Building Programme): in 1944, as Allied air raids on armament targets had become particularly effective, they were mostly for the protection of factory workers.

A total of 3,000 shelters are said to have been built for the protection of individuals; however, to be added to this figure are thousands of shelter tunnels in mines as well as others for factory workers, railway workers and the armed forces. In the sector of Luftgaukommando (Luftwaffe Military District) XI in northern Germany alone, more than 1,100 bomb-proof shelters and tunnels of all kinds were constructed.

The building programme was headed by Dr Fritz Todt, chief of the Organisation Todt (OT) within the territory of the Reich and, inside the Berlin Ring, by the architect Albert Speer in his capacity as Generalbauinspektor für die Reichshauptstadt (General Building Inspector for the Reich Capital). Following the death of Todt on February 8, 1942, the entire programme was taken over by Speer.

Two central authorities were responsible for the implementation of the building programme: the Department of Civil Air Defence in the Reichsluftfahrtministerium (Luftwaffen-Inspektion 13 — L.In.13) under Dr Kurt Knipfer, and the Generalbeauftragter für die Regelung der Bauwirtschaft (GB-Bau — General Commissioner for the Building Economy), the latter being subordinated to Hermann Göring in his capacity as the General Plenipotentiary for the Four-year Plan. The former issued instructions on the method of building; the latter guaranteed, on behalf of Hitler, the execution of building works and the allocation of materials. GB-Bau's Air Defence Department was headed briefly in 1940 by Regierungsbaurat (Government Building Consultant) Pfister and then for the entire period of the war by Reichsbaurat (Reich Building Consultant) Ludwig Seywald. During 1943 and 1944, many new organisations were established in the building and construction industry which were encompassed within the Building Department of the OT under Xaver Dorsch.

The Führer-Sofortprogramm was financed by mobilisation funds assigned to the Luftwaffe by the Reich Finance Ministry: responsibility lay with the territorial Luftgaukommandos (Luftwaffe Military Districts) with their specially created Air Defence Departments. The chief consultant together with the regional representative of GB-Bau decided on the location, method of construction and the building sequence. Added to these were representatives of the individual Gaue (Nazi

Party regions); furthermore, cities assigned building experts to assist with questions of techniques, materials and the allocation of contractors.

The head of air defence in cities in Air Raid Protection Zones Category 1 was generally the chief of police or the mayor. Departments known as Ämter für kriegswichtigen Einsatz (AKE) were created and within this framework, the municipal building control offices organised what were called Luftschutzbauämter (Air Defence Building Departments) which were entrusted with the execution of work. Administration and control were assumed by the relevant police district. Labour exchanges were responsible for allocating work to contractors and recruiting the labour force.

The development of air raid shelters had already started in the 1930s. Numerous developments originate from this period especially shelter towers. Notable among these were the Winkel, the Zombeck, Luz-Bau and Dietel shelters. These represented an innovation for hitherto shelters had always been underground. Those developed and tested during this period were the norm until 1941, especially for the German State Railways and for the protection of factory workers.

Research into shelter construction — especially with regard to the strength of concrete and the development of models economical with raw materials — was entrusted to the Institut für baulichen Luftschutz (Institute for Air Defence Construction), which had been established under Professor Theodor Kristen in 1938 at the Technische Hochschule (technical university) Braunschweig. Initial tests on models and later on full-sized objects were carried out at Rechlin, Unterlüss or Ehra Lessien where air raid shelters were subjected to explosives and bombing in order to test their resistance. One of the most important results of such tests, which were carried out on the order



After the US Eighth Air Force joined the air offensive, Hanover became a frequent target of their daytime raids. A major attack occurred on July 26, 1943, when 121 B-17 Flying Fortresses were despatched to attack the Continental rubber factories, with the 60 aircraft of the 1st Wing aiming for the

Nordhafen plant and the 61 of the 4th Wing for the main works at Vahrenwalder Strasse, seen here beneath the tail of one of the 95th Bomb Group's aircraft. In all 96 aircraft found the target, dropping some 133 tons of bombs. Sixteen B-17s were lost. (USNA)

and on behalf of the Reichsanstalt der Luftwaffe für Luftschutz (Luftwaffe Reich Institute for Air Defence), was the so-called 'Braunschweiger Schutzbewehrung' (Braunschweig Protective Fortification) which, with various modifications, was specified as the type of reinforced concrete to be used after 1942 for shelters in Phase II.

In 1935, an air defence law was passed, complemented by a second decree in 1937, setting out the fundamental principles of air raid shelter construction. The precursors of bomb-proof shelters had already been built in 1939 in some north German cities such as Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven, but it was only with the passing of the Führer-Sofortprogramm that uniform guidelines were laid down in November 1940. The most important technical criteria were the thickness for reinforced outer walls and top covering (1.10m and 1.40m in the case of surface shelters and 1.80m and 1.40m for those underground) or 2.0m in the case of concrete without steel reinforcement. Types of reinforcement were also prescribed: mesh reinforcement, spiral reinforcement, cubical and semi-circular reinforcement. Equally important was the concrete's resistance to pressure: this was set at 300kg per square centimetre and continually tested by the removal of sample cubes.

The shape and ground plan of the shelters was not specified and was supposed to harmonise with the surrounding buildings. Nevertheless the architects were given certain aesthetic criteria whereby they were expected to express architecturally the 'defensive strength of the German people'. However, this was seldom achieved under the pressure of war. For reasons of expense, clinker-brick facing was abandoned in the spring of 1941 and deferred until after the war.

The arbitrary effects of carpet bombing had not then been fully appreciated, and the shelters were therefore camouflaged: by painting them with asymmetric and realistic looking designs, by covering them with climbing plants, and by building bomb-proof shelters inside other buildings such as gasometers.

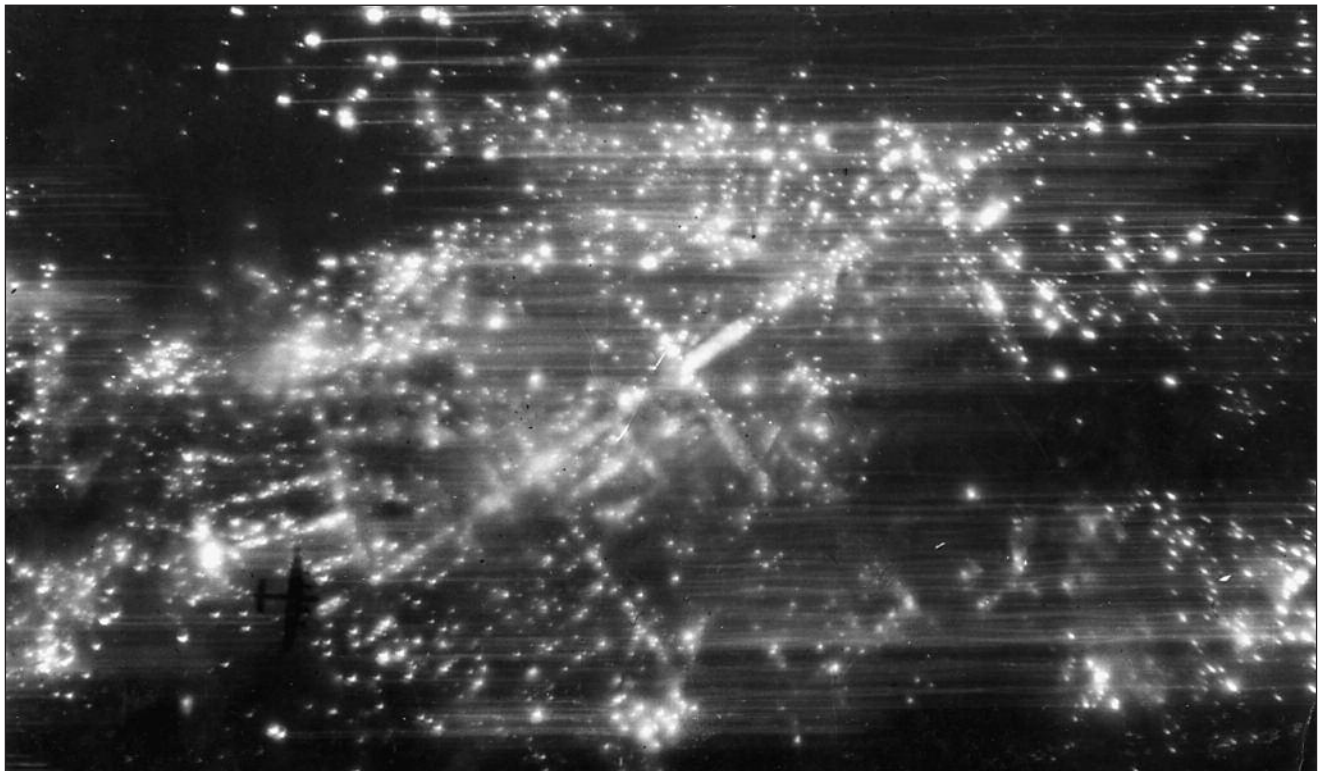
Belgian POWs and German workers during the construction of the air raid shelter at Am Klagesmarkt. (P. Mütze)

During the planning phase, there were repeated calls for the bunkers to have a peacetime role, thus taking economic considerations into account: such roles might include their use as garages, or hostels for the Hitler Youth. However, all of this was categorically rejected by the Luftwaffe. There is just one case on record where a peacetime use was found: in anticipation of the expected increase in car usage, the underground shelter on the Reeperbahn in Hamburg was designed as a garage for 430 Volkswagens.

There was also discussion as to whether the shelters could play a military role with anti-aircraft guns mounted on the roofs. Although the view of the Reich Air Ministry was that this should be refused, in individual cities such as Lübeck, flak guns were indeed placed on shelters. As late as January 1945, the Organisation Todt pointed out that embrasures should be included in future shelters in order to make them defensible. There is just one instance where such an (unsuccessful) attempt to fortify a shelter occurred: this occurred with the bunker in Josef-Klant-Strasse in Hamburg.

Nearly the entire construction industry was called upon to bring the shelter building programme to fruition: large companies such as Dyckerhoff & Widmann, Philip Holzmann, Hochtief AG, Boswau & Knauer, Züblin, Wayss & Freytag and Wiemer & Trachte were involved, as well as middle-sized local enterprises. Small construction firms joined into working groups where the scope of the project made such collaboration necessary. The shelters were all connected to water mains, electricity and the telephone system, and for this interior work large companies such as Siemens & Halske were engaged in addition to smaller firms of skilled tradesmen. The manufacture of shelter doors was carried out by companies like Pelz (Düsseldorf) or Gutehoffnungshütte (Oberhausen), emergency generators came from AEG or Deutz, ventilation systems were designed and manufactured by well-known companies such as Dräger (Lübeck) or Auer (Oranienburg) but also by smaller firms like Piller (Osterode) or Rheinwerke (Wuppertal). Toilet facilities and furnishings were mostly made and installed by local firms.





Hannover under night attack as seen from the air. This picture was taken during the RAF raid of October 8/9, 1943, the third in the series of four big attacks on Hannover and the one that caused most damage, destroying 85 per cent of the inner city. A total of 504 aircraft — 282 Lancasters, 188 Halifaxes, 26 Wellingtons and eight Mosquitos — attacked the city that night. Conditions over Hannover were clear and — unlike the two earlier raids of September 22/23 and 27/28, when faulty wind forecasts had caused the marking and bombing to be

concentrated off target — the Pathfinders were finally able to accurately mark the city centre and all bombs fell within the built-up area. The raid flattened ten square kilometres (85 per cent) of the inner city. Some 1,200 people were killed and 3,345 injured. A total of 3,932 buildings were completely destroyed and more than 30,000 damaged. In this picture, hundreds of fires from HE and incendiary bombs saturate the area south-east of the main railway station, the white ribbon running from bottom left to top right marking the trace of Sallestrasse.

From the outset, heavy plant and modern methods were used at almost every site: concrete pumps, tipper trucks on rails, excavators, bulldozers, large concrete mixers and conveyor belts. However, a standardisation of machinery and construction sites failed to materialise.

The execution of the building work was subject to great fluctuations. These were brought about by various factors: other large projects such as the Atlantic Wall tied up resources, conscription took away the German workforce, and the planning of new offensives laid claim to fuel quotas and to transport capacity which had originally been earmarked for the Sofortprogramm.

There were however also sceptics in the Luftwaffe who favoured building more shelters if an increase in the production of fighter aircraft for an active defence could not even be achieved.

Difficulties were caused by a shortage of materials. The conquest of Poland brought the acquisition of 17 cement works with an annual production of two million tonnes of high-quality Portland cement. However, there was an acute shortage of timber for shuttering, which was needed in abundance. The Reichsforstmeister (Reich Chief Forester) had decreed on October 1, 1938 that the felling of trees in 1939 should not exceed the quota for 1937. Consequently experiments were carried out with re-usable shuttering systems consisting of metal plates. Even before the outbreak of war, strains in the construction industry led to major difficulties and delays in the plans.

A shortage of cement first started to bite in 1942 and became a problem in 1943 as coal supplies became ever more difficult, and from 1944 onwards when the transport network was also targeted by air raids and frequently paralysed.

In 1942 a so-called Notausbauprogramm (Emergency Building Programme) was passed putting a stop to all extra work deemed unnecessary for bomb-proofing: this included the facing of walls, tiling of roofs, etc.

Shortcomings in the fuel situation also became evident: in 1940, 20,000 tonnes of diesel fuel and almost the same amount of petrol was set aside for the Führer-Sofortprogramm. In the spring of 1941, this quota was reduced to 16,000 tonnes, dropping further to 7,100 tonnes after the invasion of the Soviet Union. Conversion of machinery to electrical power and the use of horses and carts for moving building materials made scant difference to the sorry state of transportation. Carburettors which used wood-gas, and a greater reliance on inland shipping failed to compensate for bottlenecks in transport and fuel supplies.

Iron got through, even though promised quotas were delivered behind schedule. However, the research previously carried out at the Braunschweig Technical University into economical methods of concrete reinforcement now proved its worth and began to pay dividends.

In 1943, a ban was imposed on all construction projects, which could be lifted only in exceptional circumstances and by special application. From August 1, 1944, all that remained of the massive Sofortprogramm was the modest Mindestbauprogramm.

As time went by, it also became increasingly harder to procure internal fittings — notably emergency generators and ventilation systems. Sometimes it was possible to remove such items from bunkers along the Siegfried Line but the procurement of other equipment proved more difficult. For example, palliasses for the two million bunks which had been ordered required 30,000 tonnes of wood shavings, yet the total monthly production for January 1941, to cover the requirements for the

whole German economy, stood only at 22,000 tonnes.

The workforce constituted another bottleneck. The temporary use of military engineers and pioneer units served to bridge the shortfall only in the early phase of the building programme until the spring of 1941. In November 1940, 840,000 construction workers were registered in Germany of whom 670,000 were for the exclusive use of the armed forces and defence industry. A further 225,000 men were required, as only 80,000 were employed in the Sofortprogramm, of whom 50,000 in the building of air raid bunkers.

The shortfall was made up by recruiting numerous Italian contract workers, some of whom had been working in Germany since 1938. Added to them were Polish civilian workers and prisoners of war and, from the late summer of 1941, also Belgian and French prisoners. However, a marked shortage of workers still persisted. According to a list dated May 1943, more than 393,000 workers were employed in shelter building. Of these, 353,668 worked for firms, 16,725 were in the armed forces and 22,681 were prisoners of all categories ranging from detainees serving custodial sentences to concentration camp inmates.

With the appointment of Fritz Sauckel as Generalbevollmächtigter für den Arbeitseinsatz (General Plenipotentiary for Labour Draft) in 1943, a full-scale hunt for workers started in the occupied East as even the supply of Russian prisoners of war and Ukrainian civilian workers was insufficient to meet the demand. In 1944, Hitler called for a further 250,000 workers for shelter building but people in the East and West increasingly managed to escape the German clutches, some lying low or joining resistance and partisan groups.

German evaluations of foreign workers were mixed. Whereas part of the Italian, Polish, French and Flemish workforce was singled out for praise, workers from Holland were found unsatisfactory. The construction companies set up a scale of performance but this was often misused in that workers would be downgraded in order to justify the payment of lower wages.

Accommodation was generally in huddled camps which were sometimes run by the construction companies. In Hannover, Schuppert had a camp in Hoeltystrasse for 200 workers, Friedrich Mehmel had another at 61 Mittelfelde for 400 people, and Robert Grasdorf in Hannover-Wüffel, a firm which mainly produced concrete watch towers, had 150 people in its camp in Eichelkampstrasse. Generally speaking catering was provided and payment guaranteed.

Treatment, especially that of the Italians, was marked by discrimination and contempt and this resulted in numerous incidents between German and Italian workers. After 1943, there were more of what were claimed to be breaches of contract and also complaints about food. The assumption that foreign workers — and Italians also came into this category — were not permitted to use bomb-proof shelters, since the latter were supposed to be reserved for Germans, led to numerous problems between the Axis partners, even extending to diplomatic ill-feeling, especially as Mussolini was not prepared to extend the employment of his nationals in Germany beyond 1943.

The German authorities found themselves obliged to modify their position somewhat, as in many places the loss of workers seriously affected the construction and armament industries. Management was supposed to arbitrate to resolve conflicts and not to tolerate disrespectful comments about the way the Axis partner Italy was conducting the war. In cases where difficulties could not be settled, the labour exchanges were to step in. On November 14, 1941, the Reichsminister für Wissenschaft, Bildung und Volks-erziehung (Minister for Science, Training and Education) explained that different national groups had differing gifts and talents. Comparisons between the performances of individual peoples would not be countenanced. Towards the end of the war, there was even criticism from leading circles about the way foreign armament workers were daily refused access to shelters and tunnels.

Murderous working conditions were the order of the day when the SS was brought in to build shelters with their so-called SS-Baubrigaden (SS Construction Brigades), which were in fact little more than mobile concentration camps. Thus, for example, thousands of prisoners met a wretched death from maltreatment, hunger and lack of medical care during the building of the 'Valentin' U-boat factory bunker in the Farge district of Bremen. The inmates of the so-called Arbeitserziehungslager (AEL — Work Education Camps) were also badly treated. The prisoners here were mainly foreign civilian workers who had been arrested because of idling, rebelliousness or breaking their terms of employment and were sent to these camps, which came under the Gestapo, usually for a term of 21 days.

Various forms of resistance occurred on the construction sites although sabotage was not easy because the foreign workers were used mainly for simple tasks such as excavation.

In the final months of the war, the German civil population was also called upon to help with shelter building especially when repairs had to be carried out following direct hits or near-misses.

On October 17, 1940, on orders from the Führer-Sofortprogramm, over 400 mayors and senior municipal officials from the future

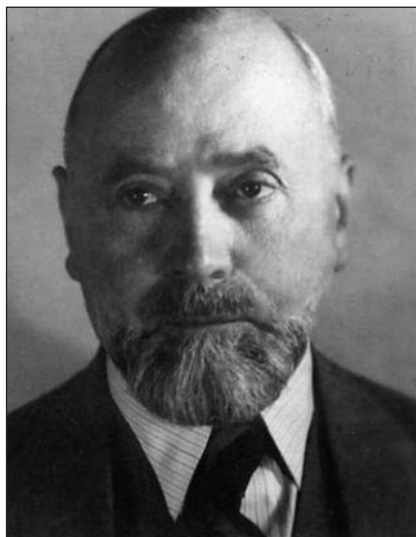


Above: Judging it lacked space to build surface shelters in the inner city, Hannover initially concentrated on building underground shelters. Construction of the subterranean shelter at Am Klagesmarkt was begun in late 1940, the contractor being Friedrich Mehmel AG. Here, pipes for pouring liquid concrete run from the pumping equipment and the concrete mixer on the right into the excavated space. Heavy plant was utilised at the outset including trailer trucks, excavators and a narrow-gauge railway. The dome in the background is that of the Anzeiger tower block. (AMF) **Below:** French POWs prepare the steel reinforcement for the Klagesmarkt shelter. (P. Mütze)



Most people parking their cars or visiting the weekly market on the Klagesmarkt are totally unaware that they are standing on top of a wartime shelter. (All present-day pictures were taken by Michael Foedrowitz.)

Right: The man in charge of the shelter building programme in Hannover was Karl Elkart, the head of the city's Planning Department and Building Control Office. A Nazi Party member since 1937, he had already made a name for himself with several designs for Party building projects. In 1940 he was 60 years old and suffering from a heart condition but despite this he managed to successfully carry through the Führer-Sofortprogramm, for which he received the Kriegsverdienstkreuze First and Second Class. Forced to leave the city council in 1945 under pressure from the British Military Government, he refused to continue working as a consultant and later went to southern Germany. (BDC/BAB)



'shelter cities' were summoned to Berlin and briefed on the construction programme. A Nazi Party speaker called for the first shelter to be completed within three months and those present were given specimen plans. Meetings of experts took place on October 30 and November 11, 1940, which resulted in the 'Instructions for the Construction of Bomb-proof Air Raid Shelters'. Out of this emerged the technical guidelines which were published in six volumes in July 1941 as 'Regulations for the Construction of Air Raid Shelters'.

Some countrywide standardisation existed for shelters for armament workers and for the various branches of the armed forces. However, standardisation did not apply to civilian shelters apart from some built to a uniform pattern within individual cities. The introduction of standardised building on a nationwide basis came relatively late and had little effect.

The local building departments promptly got down to work in late October 1940: shelters were designed, locations were agreed in conjunction with other administrative departments, models were built, construction companies were asked for specifications and quotations. Test borings were carried out to ascertain the composition of the ground for foundations, houses were demolished, businesses were moved and land was acquired (with varying degrees of pressure) from the owners, who were compensated in accordance with legislation known as the Reichsleistungsgesetz. Legal problems continued until the end of the war and beyond as extensive compensation claims were assessed and granted. Expropriation seldom occurred as such action would have smelt of Bolshevism and in order to retain remnants of the rule of law.

The cities applied for the planned number of shelters and the required quantities of materials. The initial proposals were mostly totally over-ambitious, as was the case in Bremen, and were drastically reduced. Only one city in the whole country, Emden, managed to achieve 100 per cent protection for its citizens and this came about because of good personal relations between the mayor and the central authorities in Berlin.

The planned number of those who could be protected in cities with public shelters

Although the government issued general guidelines and specifications, there was no nationwide standard design for air raid shelters and each city was left to develop its own bunkers and to decide on whether it would introduce standardisation or not. Hannover built eight different kinds of civilian shelters: underground shelters, round tower shelters, irregular design shelters, and five types of standardised square shelters, known as types H (subdivided in H I, II and III), B and C. This plan, signed by Karl Elkart, is of the ground floor of a Type H II 4 shelter. The digit behind the Roman numeral indicated the number of floors within the building. (Historisches Museum Hannover)

rose from 3.3 to 9 per cent of the local population. By 1944, this often reached 80 to 90 per cent due to mass evacuation, conscription into the Wehrmacht, and the number of people who had fallen victim to the bombing.

The estimated number of safe places was subject to certain fluctuations: at first it had been assumed that people would sleep in the shelters and accordingly most places were assigned for bunks. From 1943, more and more beds were removed to cater for the ever-increasing crush and provide a greater protected area. Towards the end of the war, an occupancy figure was recorded often ten times greater than the original planned total.

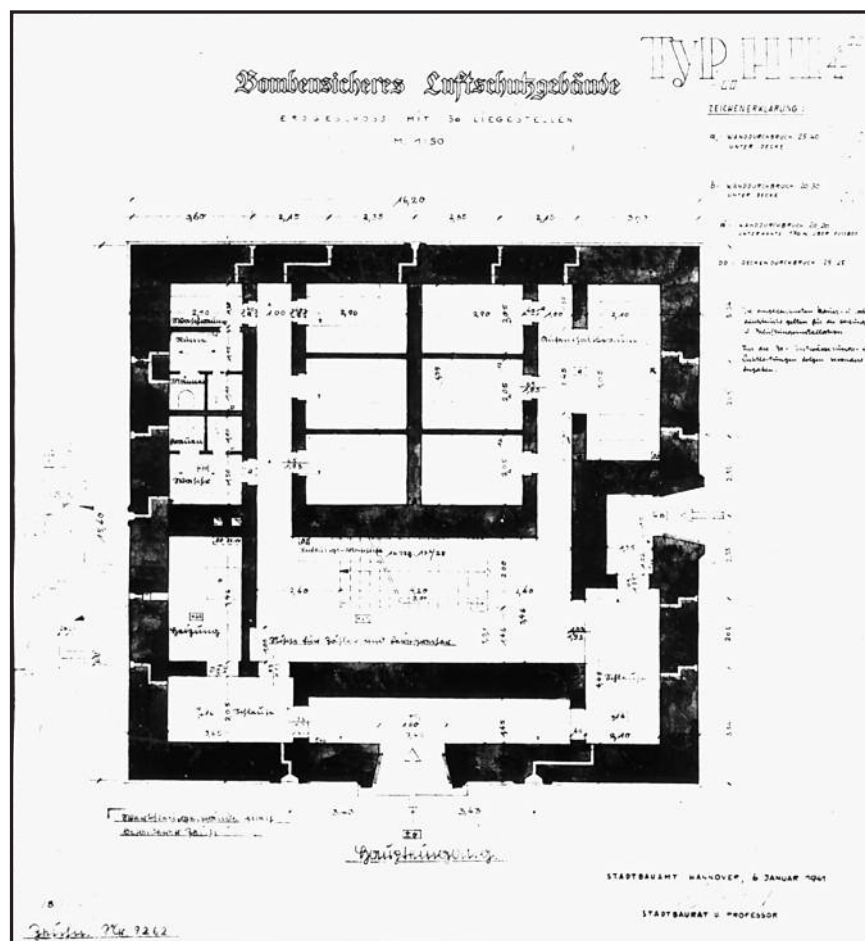
Completion times varied: thus in places with a high water-table (e.g. near the coast) the driving of pile foundations took on average three months longer than expected.

By January 29, 1942, the concreting stage of 1,215 shelters for civilian use had been completed and a further 513 were under construction. By August 31, 1943, there were 2,055 shelters in 76 cities and 4.3 million cubic metres of reinforced concrete had been used.

These figures fell far short of requirements as even Joseph Goebbels, Minister for Propaganda, confided to his diary. He himself wanted to implement a shelter building programme in Berlin with 800,000 places. Furthermore, the population made their protests known when they felt their city district had been neglected. The provision of shelters for VIPs in Berlin came in for equally harsh criticism. Such protests were taken very seriously, especially by the Party, which, through its efforts to remedy such disgraces, was able to record a certain degree of caring.

Staff were employed to oversee the shelters: wardens and administrators ensured that regulations were adhered to and that technical facilities were maintained. Marshals made sure that admission took place smoothly and that there were no problems once people were inside. Doctors, midwives, dentists and auxiliary helpers from the Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (NSV — National Socialist People's Welfare Organisation) were also there as well as volunteer 'self-help groups' of the Sicherheits- und Hilfsdienst (SHD — Security and Help Service), who went into action in the neighbourhood immediately after a raid to carry out fire fighting and rescue work.

At the beginning of the war, the intention was to issue passes to neighbourhood families who would otherwise have no form of protection. However, the crush made the checking of these passes totally impracticable. The wardens were frequently unpopular and would often abuse their power by standing at the entrance and make their 'personal selections', deciding who could come in and



who could not. There was no outright ban on entry for Jews but they had to be separated from the other occupants. Entry was denied to foreigners and prisoners of war but they would sometimes be tacitly allowed in with everybody else. Plans to admit only women and children and to refuse entry to servicemen caused great unrest and protests, as was evidenced in Rostock. Ultimately it was left to the warden, who was often a member of the SA, to decide who could come in. The wardens were also responsible for closing the shelter thus leaving to their fate desperate people who would crowd outside hammering on the doors. During snap raids this frequently led to panic and cost many lives. The reason was often because air raid warnings were given too late. Indeed after 1942 the warning system increasingly failed and was unable to cope, especially with the danger posed by high-speed Mosquito bombers.

People had great faith in the shelters and felt safe inside. As the bombing was stepped up, it became increasingly clear that all other places of refuge offered but limited protection. There was little panic inside but things became difficult when direct hits or near-misses caused the structure to sway and the lights to go out. People would then pray, scream or just stand silently waiting to see what would happen. If a shelter was hit and penetrated by the explosion, this would be kept secret and witnesses ordered to remain silent so as not to shake public confidence.

The Reichsanstalt der Luftwaffe für Luftschutz recorded over 120 direct hits on air raid shelters during the period to March 1945, many of which undoubtedly penetrated the structures. Probably the first penetration was recorded on July 16, 1941, in Bremen when a 1,000-pound HE bomb came through the roof of the shelter at Wilhelm-Wolters-Strasse and killed four people. At a subsequent meeting at the Reich Air Ministry on July 16, 1941, it was realised that the shelters were not bomb-proof and that the degree of protection depended on the calibre of the bombs. It was nevertheless decided not to strengthen the protective tops of shelters from Phase I.

The second shock came on the night of July 29/30, 1943, during Operation 'Gomorrha' by the RAF on Hamburg (see *After the Battle* No. 70). The shelter in Wielandstrasse, a structure of the reinforced Phase II, was grazed on its seventh floor by an aerial mine. It exploded, ripping a 2.5m x 1.8m hole through the reinforced-concrete wall, which was 2 metres thick. Two women were killed and the 2,000 occupants escaped with shock.

Despite special interior partitions which were supposed to reduce the blast from any penetrating bomb, devastating losses could occur. During a raid on Frankfurt on September 23, 1944, the shelter in Mühlgasse was penetrated resulting in the deaths of 172 people and leaving over 90 seriously injured. The shocked survivors poured out crying 'Stop the war' but policemen and Party officials who were present took no action. The penetration causing the greatest loss of life was probably the one recorded in Hagen on March 15, 1945, at the shelter in Körnerstrasse when the blast from a high-explosive bomb reduced nearly 400 people to a bloody pulp which was pressed into the porous walls.

When there were direct hits and bomb penetrations, rumours soon ran rife. According to these, 20,000 people were killed in the Ruhr by a bomb which penetrated a shelter; during the catastrophic fire in Hamburg, 5,000 people suffocated in shelters situated in the fire storm. The authorities reacted vigorously against such rumours, especially as it was proved there was not a single shelter death due to the effects of smoke in places affected by extensive fires. During the annihilating raid on Bremen on the night of August 18/19, 1944, thousands of shelterers were surrounded by a sea of flames, 4,000 in Zwinglstrasse alone. A similar situation



The majority of Hannover's 56 civilian air raid shelters were built during Phase I of the shelter building programme, which ran from November 1940 to July 1941. Prescribed for all shelters in this phase were outer walls of 1.1 metres thick and a top-covering of 1.4 metres. This is the H I 2 bunker at No.1 Mecklenheide (today Revaler Strasse). Designed for 531 persons, its construction was started at the end of 1940. An identical shelter was erected in the Dorpater Strasse. In all, there were seven H I 2 bunkers in Hannover. (AMF)



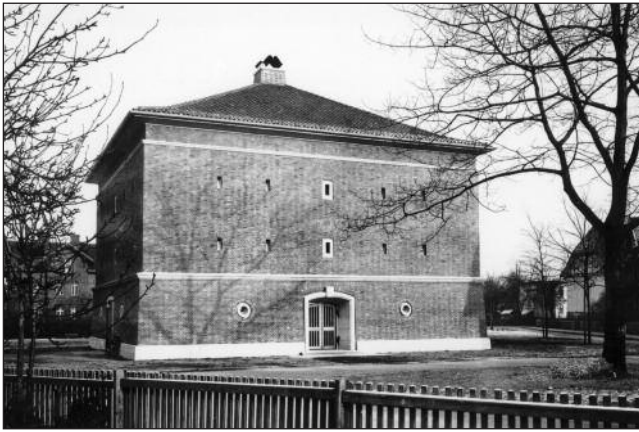
Decommissioned by the Allied Military Government in 1945, the majority of the wartime shelters in Hannover stood vacant for many years after the war. Most of them were not taken back in use until 1969-70, when 38 of them were recommissioned as air raid shelters as part of the resurrected Zivilen Luftschutz (Civil Defence). The bunker in Revaler Strasse was placed under the jurisdiction of the Hannover local authority in December 1970 and from October 1976 was used briefly by an artist. Since 1990 it has served as a storage area.

occurred during the devastating raid on Braunschweig on October 19, 1944, as over 23,000 people in six shelters in the city centre were threatened by death from the flames. In all these cases, the fire service used the tactic of 'water lanes' to reach the shelters, got the occupants out and brought them to safety.

As Allied troops arrived on German soil, people were driven to the shelters as tanks approached. The situation became critical for civilians when the armed forces or the Waffen-SS commandeered the shelters for battle command posts and directed military operations from there. In Aachen (see *After the Battle* No. 42) and Breslau, they were integrated into the city defences. In the Ruhr and in Bremen people sat for weeks on end totally terrified and apathetic in those stifling, dark concrete boxes. In the final stages of the battle for Berlin, the SS had the shelter

at the Anhalterbahnhof walled up in order to stop its occupants giving themselves up to the Red Army. In terminal situations like these a wave of suicides would run through the shelters. The dead were buried out in front during short breaks in the fighting; in other cases bodies were piled in rooms which housed the machinery. In Bremen the population spent over a week in April 1945 in the city's shelters, the upper floors of which experienced temperatures of up to 50 degrees Celsius (120 degrees F). The humidity was so high that children died and elderly people suffered circulatory problems. Human sweat ran out of the air vents leaving ugly black streaks on the outside walls.

When the fighting was over, people came out of their underground and surface shelters, shelter-towers and cellars. Most swore never to go back in.



The design of the next type of shelters, the H II, called for its outer walls to be brick-clad, but this form of embellishment was soon dropped due to lack of materials. The H II 3 shelter in Fuldastrasse has the brick cladding that identifies it as one of the first to be built in Hannover. Its shell was completed on June 18, 1941, and it entered into service as shelter No. 23 on January 14, 1942. (Historisches Museum Hannover)



Decommissioned in 1945, this shelter too stood unused until 1969 when it was taken into use as a storage facility. In 1970, it was taken over by Civil Defence, then rented out to an artist in 1971. To date it has been used by various groups (including a diving club, which stored its compressed air cylinders there) and music bands. Fuldastrasse is today named Bremer Strasse.

Hannover was one of the 18 locations in Luftgaukommando XI whose buildings stemmed from the original Sofortprogramm. For civilian use, 64 shelters in total were planned for 40,000 people and at a cost of 40 million Reichsmarks. A total of 56 of this type materialised: five underground shelters, a shelter tunnel and 50 surface shelters, of which four were tower shelters. For the railways, the biggest of all was created under the station building and the square in front. This could accommodate up to 12,000 people. Added to these were two Winkel-type tower shelters for railway workers, two Luftwaffe flak towers, of which only one was completed, as well as at least 12 shelters for the workers of Hannover armament factories.

Hannover had the following types of shelter: the majority consisted of Types H I and H II, as well as three of Type H III, which had a stairway tower built at the front; all belonged to Phase I. The large shelters of Phase II included Types B and C. There were no hospital bunkers in Hannover. However, some shelters had operating theatres; in the case of the Haltenhoffstrasse, this was set up in the basement and connected to the nearby Nordstadt Hospital by means of an underground passage. The Südstadt district saw the biggest project, which was started in 1943, in Sallstrasse at the corner of Kortumstrasse. Here 3,875 places were planned but the project was abandoned in the same year due to a shortage of materials after the excavations had been carried out. It is thought that the Sallstrasse bunker was also to have been linked by an underground passage with the Henriettenstift Hospital opposite. As there were no proper hospital bunkers the chief of police issued a public health order in 1944 which, among other things, provided all shelters with doctors and nurses. Midwives were located in 21 of the shelters although there is no evidence of any birth having taken place. Sick wards were set up in some cases, for example 70 beds at the one in Sahlkamp.

The only shelter which could be described as a hospital bunker lay within the shelter area of the Gaubefehlsstand (Gau command post) which was used by doctors and nurses from the Siloah Hospital. Operating theatres are also said to have been located at the railway station shelter.

Stadtbaurat Professor Karl Elkart was responsible for the implementation of the Sofortprogramm in Hannover; the office in charge of construction was section I of the Civil and Structural Engineering Department. Responsible for civil defence was the Chief of Police, Geyer, who was succeeded in July 1943 by Dr Erich Deutschbein. In

charge of civil defence matters at police headquarters was Major der Schutzpolizei Kellner and his deputy, Major der Schutzpolizei Schiele.

The regional representative of the Generalbeauftragter für die Regelung der

Bauwirtschaft (GB-Bau) was Landesoberbaurat Müller. Oberbaurat Orthaus, born in Düren in 1920, and Baurat Schulz were charged with the establishment and implementation of the shelter programme. Baurat Gades controlled the interior work.



The H II 3 shelter at Grimsehlweg, pictured following bomb damage to the roof on August 2, 1944. (AMF)



After the war it was used for storage and later for rehearsals by music groups.



Above: The H II 3 shelter in Hesemannstrasse, designed for 309 persons and built in 1942. The picture was taken on August 7, 1944. In all, Hannover built 14 shelters of the H II 3 type. (AMF) Below: Decommissioned in 1945, the shelter became a school building. Today it houses the annexe of a commercial school. The brick building has gone, its site now being the school playground.

Liaison with regional representatives was carried out by the building consultant, Dipl. Ing. Dademasch, technical director at the Hannover branch of Philip Holzmann, together with his deputy, Dipl. Ing. Frantz, from the Hannover construction company of Frantz & Co. The city was divided into three building zones whose boundaries corresponded with those of the civil defence. In the northern zone, Stadtbauamtmann Mütze oversaw the construction of shelters, in the western zone Stadtbauamtmann Liesebach and in the southern zone Stadtbauamtmann Karl Thiel. The eastern part of Hannover came under the joint control of the southern and northern zones.

In Hannover, construction companies from both the local area and further afield were engaged in shelter building: Philip Holzmann and Wayss & Freytag. In addition came the middle-sized local firms Johannes Gundlach, Friedrich Mehmel, Fritz Schuppert, and W. Wallbrecht, a Hannover civil and structural engineering company. Cement came from the Teutonia und Germania Zementwerke in the Anderten district of Hannover. Electrical equipment for the interior came from Siemens & Halske. Shelter doors were obtained from Mannesman AG of Berlin, filters and ventilation systems were provided by Piller, which was based at Osterode in the Harz mountains. Metalwork, carpentry, heating and plumbing firms were employed to fit out the interiors.



The first shelters of Phase I were mainly underground as there was little land available for surface shelters in the densely-built inner city. These underground shelters (Ballhofstrasse Am Klagesmarkt; Bergstrasse; Continentalplatz and Schützenplatz) provided accommodation for 25,000 people. Two

shelters (Rampenstrasse and Blumenauer Strasse) were hybrids — partly below and partly above ground. It was not long before the construction of costly underground shelters was abandoned. As the war continued, the sites of bombed-out houses provided space for shelter building.



The H II 3 shelter in Grasweg in Langenhagen, the suburb of Hannover that lies north of the Dortmund — Berlin autobahn, photographed on August 2, 1944. At the rear stands the old Langenhagen town hall. (AMF)



This shelter was one of those transferred to the Hannover Civil Defence during the Cold War. In the 1990s it was used to store pumps and engines belonging to the city's emergency services.



The H II 4 type of shelter was identical to the H II 3 but with a floor added, giving space for some 250 extra persons. This is the H II 4 in Bunnenbergstrasse in the Hainholz district (north of the inner city). It stands alone in order to avoid the risk of exits becoming blocked by debris or fallen trees. Clearly visible is the corrugated steel sheeting which protects the chimney. (AMF)



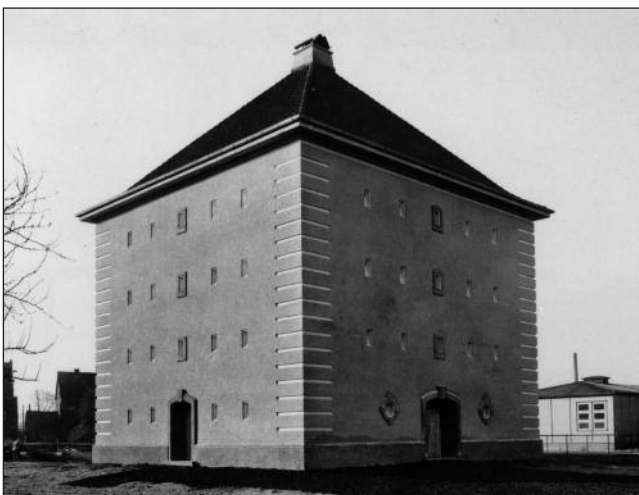
The immediate post-war period in Hannover was dominated by an acute housing shortage, and this shelter was one of those used for emergency accommodation. It later became a meeting point notorious for its brawls, noisy disturbances and drinking sessions in summer. Just before it was due to be landscaped, a wall was built to support climbing plants but this was soon vandalised.



Left: The H II 4 shelter in Höfestrasse. Designed by the Hannover construction company Grundlach for 751 persons, it was taken into use as bunker No. 18. This picture showing its south side was taken on August 7, 1944. Note the new tiles put on



the roof after an air raid. (AMF) *Right:* The same shelter today. In order to hide the grey concrete mass it has been covered with greenery and trees have been planted close by. A snack bar has been set up in front.



Above: The H II 4 shelter in Nordfeldstrasse in the Ricklingen district, south of the city centre. In all, Hannover built six shelters of this type, all during Phase I of the shelter building programme. (Historisches Museum Hannover) *Right:* After the war, this shelter was used for many years by a bird fancier and also housed music rehearsal rooms. Today it serves as a Civil Defence facility and fire brigade garage. Note the large concrete siren for disaster warnings.





Type H III shelters were recognisable from the stairway towers at the front giving access to the roof without the need for an opening in the top-covering. All of them had red-brick cladding and a saddle roof. Only three were built. This is the one on Am Welfenplatz, pictured here on July 21, 1944, with the Apostel Church to the left. Towards the end of the war the shelter received a direct hit but the resulting explosion did not penetrate the structure. (AMF)



In 1947 this shelter was converted to a hotel — but one with a dubious reputation: it was said that one part was a hotel and the other a brothel! In 1971 it had to be closed for reasons of public health. In 1981 it was renovated at a cost of DM 100,000 and taken into use as a refuge for homeless people. It is still on the Civil Defence list, being classed to safely shelter 1,103 persons for ten hours in case of an emergency.

Also built in Phase I of the programme in Hannover were numerous shelters of Type H I 2 and H II 3 or 4 (floors), some of them still being clad with clinker bricks or camouflage

paint. Also covered fully with red-brick cladding were the three completed Type H III shelters (Stader Landstrasse, Bahnhofstrasse and Welfenplatz) with their external

stairways, by which the attic storey above the top deck could be reached. All Type H shelters had saddle roofs and the architecturally characteristic square format.



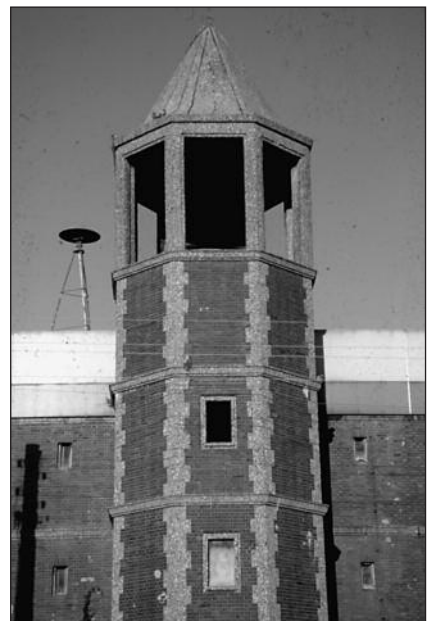
A second H III shelter stands in Bahnhofstrasse in Misburg, the outlying district on the eastern edge of Hannover. This shelter (No. 33) was also the command post for the Air Raid Defence Sector Misburg (code-name 'Lerche'). The view is eastwards from the Deurag-Nerag refinery building in Wiesenstrasse. (AMF)



Bahnhofstrasse has been renamed Anderter Strasse, and the shelter is now minus its roof. Since 1980 it has been used by local clubs, but it is still a Civil Defence facility, classed as offering shelter for 783 persons for three hours although it is not proof against atomic, biological or chemical weapons.



Above and right: On September 11, 1944, during a daylight raid on Misburg by 88 B-24s of the US Eighth Air Force, the Bahnhofstrasse shelter received a direct hit. The bomb passed through the saddle roof and exploded on the top-covering. None of the occupants was injured but the force of the explosion blew out the southern gable wall. Where it had hit, the bomb left only a shallow depression and brittle concrete with some of the iron reinforcement rods exposed. The underside of the top-covering suffered just a few cracks. Two months later, during the American daylight raid of November 26, the shelter was hit again, and one person was killed outside in front of it. (AMF)

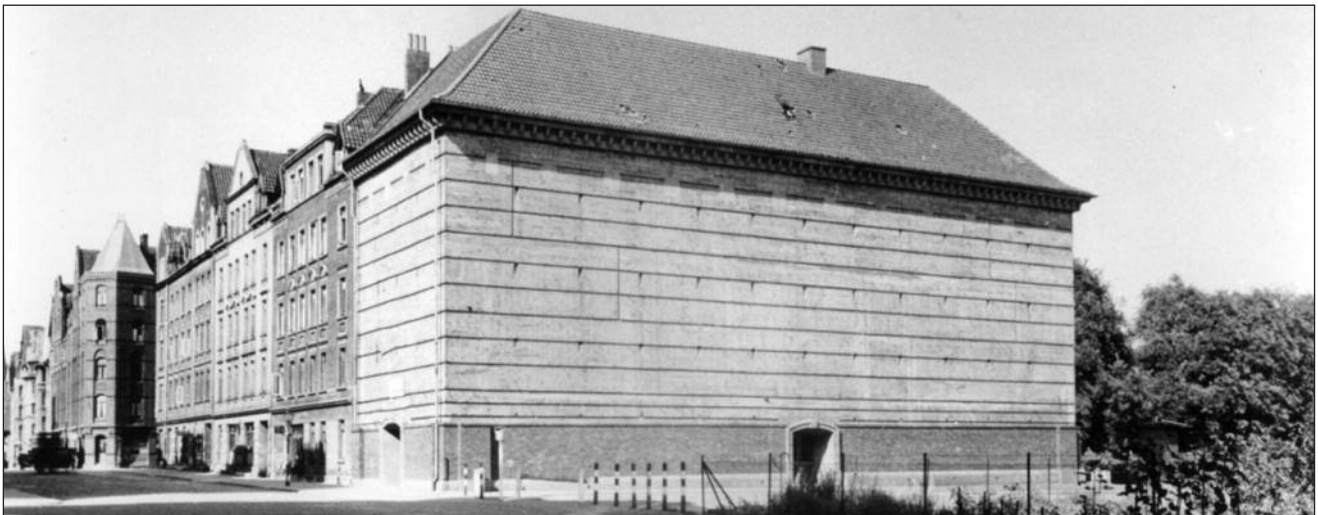




Left: Apart from the standardised types, there were three shelters built during Phase I whose shape was dictated by local circumstances. The strongest shelter in Hannover was that in Friesenstrasse in the Oststadt district, photographed here on July 16, 1944. It was put up in the gap that was left after the houses at Nos. 32 and 33 were destroyed by the RAF raid of February 10/11, 1941, when 222 aircraft bombed the city, killing 101 persons (this was the RAF's largest raid

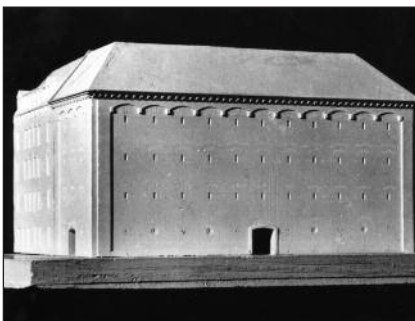


on a single city up to that time). Its top-covering was 3.5 metres thick in parts, concreting of the top layer being carried out at the end of 1942. (AMF) **Right:** After 1945 the shelter was decommissioned and planned for use as a 'Shelter Hotel'. From 1945 to 1948 it served as a store for clothes and furniture and in the 1990s it housed a recording studio among other things. The two trees survived the wartime fires and explosions.



Shelters with asymmetrical ground plans or those which fitted onto the plot included the one in Friesenstrasse (the only one to have a roof of up to 3.50 metres in thickness), the Tonstrasse shelter and the shelter at the stadium in Haltenhoffstrasse.

Another irregular shelter was the one in Tonstrasse, built in the form of a trapezium with two gabled ends of different lengths. Construction started in 1943. According to a report of the 11th Police District, one occupant had a fatal heart attack during the RAF raid on November 8/9, 1944, when 50 Mosquitos attacked the city (one of the 46 Mosquito nuisance raids on Hannover). Note the bomb and shrapnel damage to the roof. (AMF)



Before any shelter was built, a plasticine model was made based on the plans to check that it was architecturally in keeping with the surroundings. However, the expensive façade of the Tonstrasse shelter was never realised because the cost of the brick cladding was too high and banned after the spring of 1941. It was built with an exposed concrete finish. (Historisches Museum Hannover)



After the war the shelter was used for a long time as emergency accommodation. During this time a murder is supposed to have been committed here. Later it was transferred to the Civil Defence, classed to provide shelter for 1,365 persons for a period of ten hours.



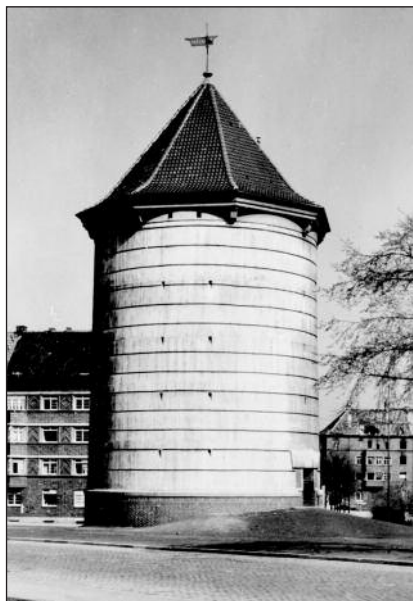
Left: Also erected in Phase I of Hannover's shelter building programme were four round tower shelters. This is the one on Deisterplatz. Designed by the firm of Huta (Hoch- und Tiefbau-Aktiengesellschaft) Hannover for 698 persons, shelter No. 8 stood on land belonging to the old and well-respected family of Baron von Alten. With eight floors (one of them underground) it rose 32.5 metres high. Its outer walls were 2.5 metres thick (narrow-



ing to 1.8 metres in the upper part). The design of the roof, the ledges and the cladding in natural stone were borrowed from the water tower in the Vahrenwalder Strasse, in operation since 1911 and itself styled on a mediaeval fortified tower. This led many Hannoverians to initially assume that the round shelters were water towers. (AMF) **Right:** Today the Deisterplatz tower is a listed building standing on lawns in the centre of a roundabout.

In 1941 construction started in Hannover of four round shelters: in Deisterplatz, Hoffmann-von-Fallersleben Strasse, Hannoversche Strasse and Sandstrasse. Numerous stylistic features were borrowed from the water tower in Vahrenwalder Strasse. Some had a base clad with natural stone, others had brick cladding at entrance level. These tower shelters were later somewhat unpopular as they were subject to violent swaying motions and it took a relatively long time to enter them.

Right: The round shelter in the Hoffmann-von-Fallersleben-Strasse in the Ricklingen district. As this was near the Vereinigte Leichtmetallwerke it was also used by factory employees. Following the air raids of 1944 the whole area was so pitted with bomb craters that the shelterers sometimes had difficulty in leaving when the All Clear sounded. (AMF) **Far right:** Hoffmann-von-Fallersleben-Strasse is today called Friedrich-Ebert-Platz. Having stood unused for many years, in 1971 the tower was taken over by the Civil Defence, classed as offering protection for 570 persons for three hours. Today it stands empty.



Left: The round shelter in the Sandstrasse (bunker No. 39), pictured during the first half of 1943 by Wilhelm Hauschild, a well-known press photographer in Hannover. Contracted by Ways & Freytag AG of Hannover and built by French POWs, it had only five above-ground floors, giving a height of 25 metres. In the background is the Continental-Reifenwerke — then as now the



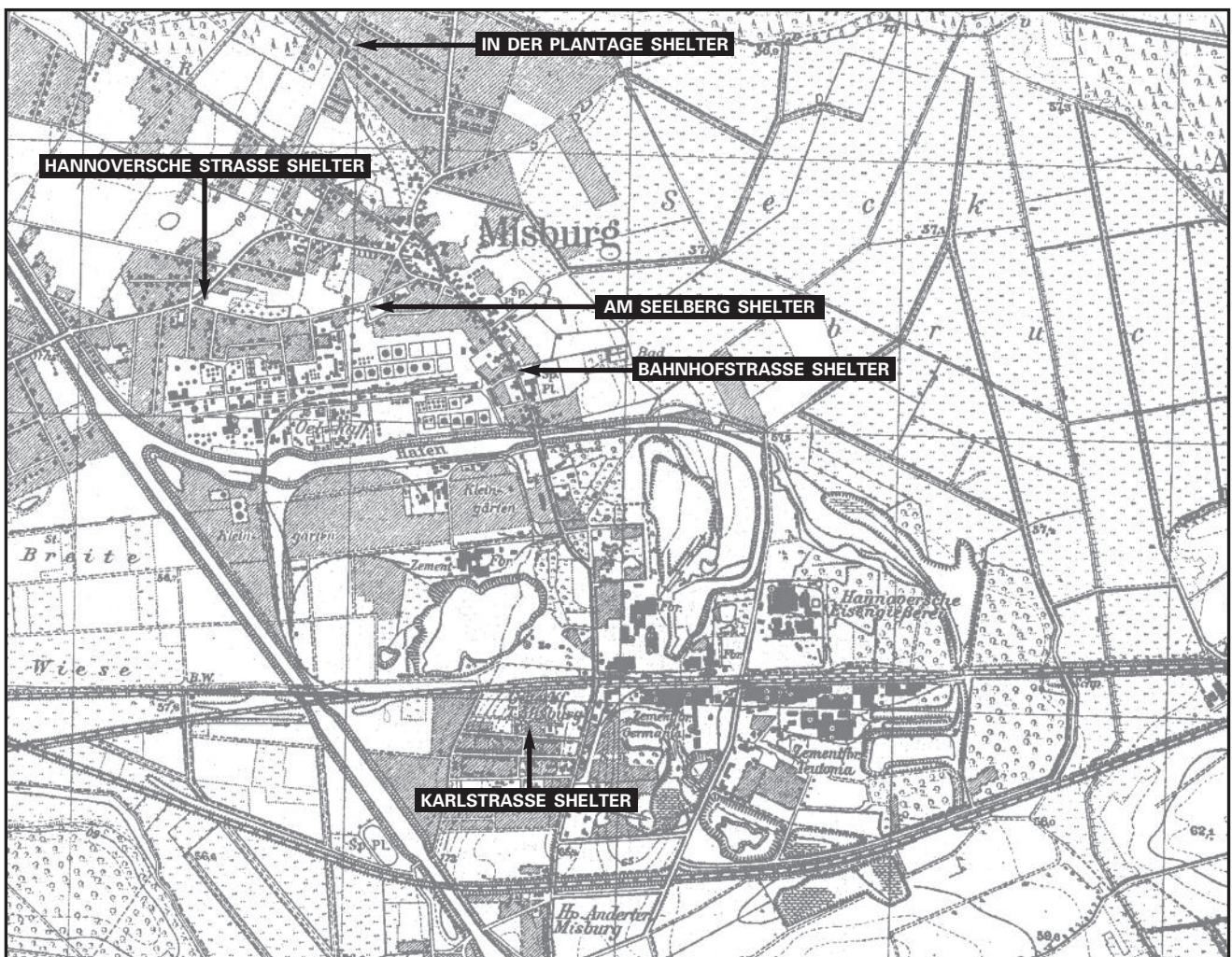
largest rubber tyre factory in Germany. Light flak was deployed on its roofs. (Bildagentur Hecht & Zimmermann) **Right:** Later bombing destroyed all of the surrounding buildings, and this is what the location looks like today. Since the war Sandstrasse has been named Kopernikusstrasse and the left wing of the 'Conti' building has acquired two more floors.



The fourth of the round-type shelters stands in the Hannoversche Strasse. It was completed in 1942. Unlike the cladding with natural stone used in the other three tower shelters, this one had a brick cladding added. Tower shelters were unpopular with the public because they had a tendency to sway when a bomb exploded nearby. (AMF)



In 1959 a water tank with a capacity 800 cubic metres was placed on top of the Hannoversche Strasse shelter, the 'decommissioning slit' blown by the British to demilitarise the shelter on the right-hand side being filled with glass bricks. Sold to a private individual for DM 1,000, today pop groups use the building for rehearsals.



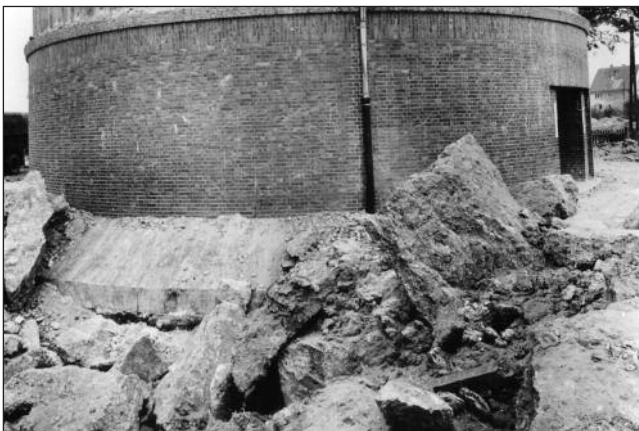
The Air Raid Defence Sector Misburg, which came under the Hannover Sector, was one of the Allied bombers' main targets. Misburg lies on the eastern edge of Hannover and was the location of the Deurag-Nerag refinery, which produced 65 per cent of Germany's engine oil. During the war some 45,000 bombs were

dropped here. At least two factory shelters were built to protect the German workforce. In all, the civil population had six shelters; the mayor had his headquarters in the H III shelter on Bahnhofstrasse (see page 13). The Grenzstrasse shelter lies to the west, off the edge of the map. All these shelters still exist today. (AMF)



The damage in the refinery area as seen from the air. Two of the five air raid shelters on the map are visible. An estimated 5,000 bombs did not explode, of which some 2,000 have so far

been recovered. Even today, 60 years later, almost every month whole neighbourhoods of Misburg or Anderten have to be evacuated to allow bomb disposal work to take place.



Left: On August 24, 1944, the US Eighth Air Force launched a heavy raid against the Deurag-Nerag refinery during which 93 B-24s dropped 232 tons of bombs. The air raid warning (the city's 509th) sounded at 1030 hours and a team of 66 men of the SHD (volunteer self-help groups) had already assembled in the Hannoversche Strasse shelter. A bomb struck the reinforced concrete ledge of the tower, which went around it like



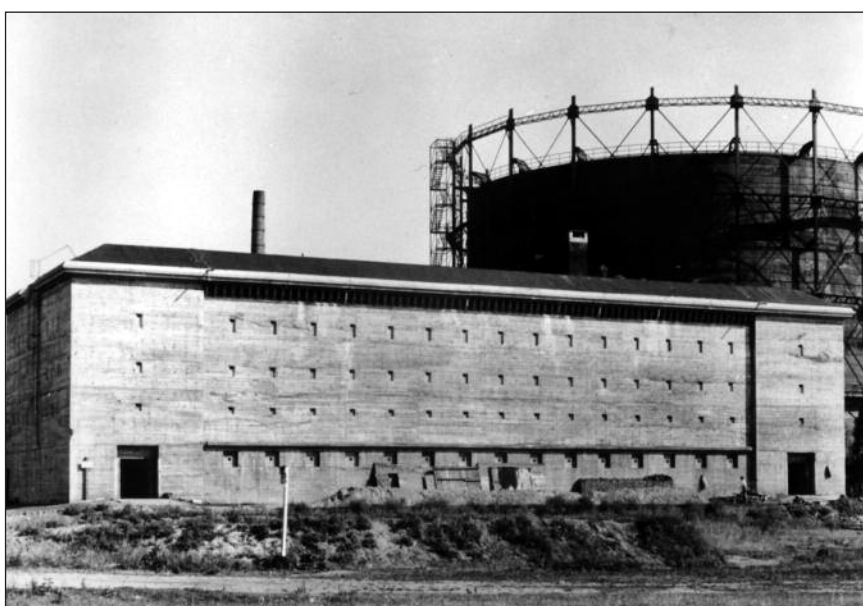
the brim of a hat. One metre thick, its purpose was to prevent bombs from passing under the structure and also to afford additional stability. At 1207 hours the sector command post at the Bahnhofstrasse shelter received a message reporting many seriously injured at the Hannoversche Strasse shelter following a near-miss. (AMF) *Right:* The brick-walled entrance must have been added just before war's end.

Right: Phase II of the shelter building programme began in July 1942 and ran until May 1943. Bunkers built during this period had a prescribed thickness of 2 metres for the outer walls and 2.5 metres for the roof. In Hannover they were of two types, B and C, all of which were large oblong bunkers measuring 50 by 20 metres with four or five floors and a flat roof. Although designed to accommodate some 2,000 people, up to 10,000 would crowd into them during alerts. A total of nine shelters of this type were built. This is the one in Bothfelder Strasse (now Am Listholze), intended for 2,299 persons. (AMF)

Within the scope of Phase II, 12 further shelters were planned: the exposed-concrete variety of groups B and C. These measured some 20m x 50m and had four floors. They had flat roofs and four entrances at the narrow ends. Some had blast walls in front of the entrances like the one in Lönnsstrasse, and in others (for example, the one in Sahlkamp) the ventilation sections were specially reinforced with concrete cladding. In the case of those in Rotermundstrasse and Herrenhäuser Strasse, external buildings were erected in the central part of the long sides. These shelters had for the most part a capacity for over 2,000 people but at times housed up to 10,000 people. In all, nine shelters of these two types were erected.

In the summer of 1942, 32 shelters had been finished in Hannover. The concreting had been completed in 12 of these and a further 11 were in the initial stages. On March 22, 1943, Professor Elkart declared that 45 bomb-proof shelters were available for 26,107 people. In 1939, Hannover had a population of 471,000 which meant that approximately 5.7 per cent of all citizens could be accommodated in safety. In temporary use were nine shelters with a capacity of 8,000. According to Elkart, 54 shelters with a total of 43,471 places would be available within a few months. At that time, this constituted some 10 per cent of the population. Additionally, three shelters offering 7,437 places were under construction, and a further three with 8,084 places had been started. In 1943, Elkart was talking about 61 shelters having space for 61,019 people. Applying the usual five-fold factor of occupation, it would therefore have been theoretically possible to accommodate the 270,000 inhabitants who remained in the city. However, the building project did not go ahead as planned. At this time only 260 civilian workers and 90 prisoners of war were engaged in shelter building.

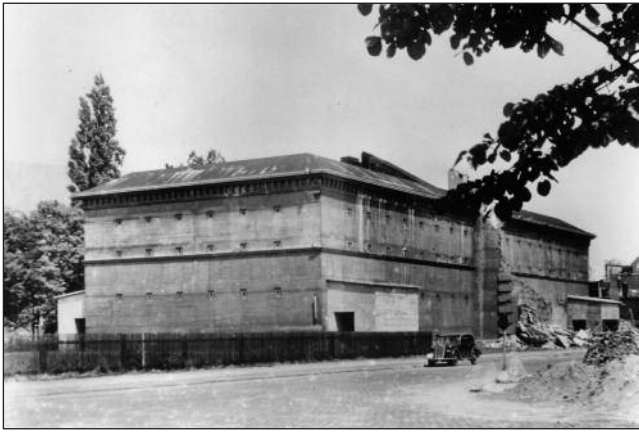
When it came to choosing locations, consideration was mainly given to working-class areas. In Südstadt, a solid middle-class district and the home of salaried employees, not one shelter was erected. A former ice factory in Mendelsohnstrasse was strengthened, but only as an emergency measure. When the sirens went off, many people from here went to the more distant shelter in Lönnsstrasse in the Hindenburg district or to the civilian shelter area of the Gau Command Post by the Maschsee lake. Yet the danger to the inhabitants of the whole district persisted. Time and again people would be killed by bombs which were already falling as they made their way there. The greatest loss of life occurred during the heavy night raid on October 8/9, 1943, when Südstadt including Sallstrasse was the primary target and the district was totally destroyed. The proposed tower shelter in Sallstrasse came too late. Building had stopped because of lack of materials and the call on November 8, 1944, by the city's administrative heads of department for its construction to be continued was illusory. There was no longer a requirement for shelters in the burnt-out wasteland of Südstadt: there was simply no one left to use them.



The shelter in the Bothfelder Strasse after completion. The gasometer in the background was lowered during alerts. The occupants of the shelter often feared they would be killed if the gasometer was hit. (AMF)



The same shelter today. After the war it was used for exhibitions and events and for this a large section of the upper outer wall was removed. After June 1, 1957, it provided housing accommodation.



Left: The C 4 shelter in Lönssstrasse. The land on which it was to be erected belonged to the Israelite Association for the Aged and Infirm. Curiously enough, in view of the ongoing seizure of Jewish property, the Reich took care to legally buy the plot of 3,347 square metres on January 10, 1941, albeit at a very low price of just 16 Reichsmarks per square metre. In this picture taken in 1944, the shelter's porch has been totally destroyed by

In addition to the shelter in Sallstrasse, a further building project in Bischofsholerdamm was halted and those proposed for Limmerstrasse (Linden), in Kleefeld at the

site of the post office shelter, in Waldheim-Waldhausen, in Südstadt, at Kirchrode and at Schwanenburg got no further than the initial planning stages.



a direct hit. (AMF) Right: From June 1945 the Lönssstrasse shelter was used by the German Red Cross, which was allowed to continue and set up a pharmacy after the building had been seized by the British Military Government. In 1989 it was decided to re-commission it as an air raid shelter. The work cost one million DM and it can now provide shelter for 1,721 persons for a period of ten hours.

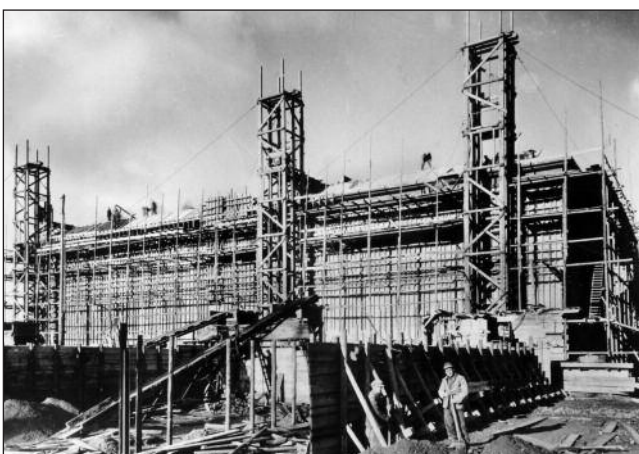
However, construction work continued until February 1945, for example on the shelter in Wiehbergstrasse in the Döhren district and also on the tunnel at Linden.



The Type C 5 shelter in the Herrenhäuser Strasse in the Herrenhausen district (north-west of the city centre), pictured on August 5, 1944. It had a fully equipped hospital ward. (AMF)



After 1945 the German Red Cross used the bunker to store equipment. The building also provided accommodation for thousands of bombed-out people and refugees from the east.



Left: Shuttering in place on the Type C 4 P shelter in the Rotermundstrasse, which was not completed entirely in accordance with plans. It was built by Boswau & Knauer between October 21, 1941 and December 15, 1942, but not handed over for use until April 28, 1944. The three elevators on the front are for raising concrete. During the American daylight raid on June 8, 1944, the shelter suffered a near-miss but, although the building shook violently and the occupants came close to panic, no one was injured. The structure merely dropped by about 2cm and a crack appeared in the ceiling.



Ten days later, on June 18, 150 four-engined American bombers again attacked Hannover and there were several near-misses at many shelters including this one. A 500kg high-explosive bomb smashed into the north side of the shelter shaking it and causing the ceiling on the ground floor to drop by 1.5cm. (AMF) Right: The Rotermundstrasse shelter today. It was used as a blanket store in 1945 and later as a rehearsal room for music groups. It is still on the Civil Defence list, classed to provide security for 2,922 persons for three hours although not against ABC weapons.

Hitlerjugend take the salute outside the Gaubefehlsstand (Nazi Party Regional Command Post) on Schützenplatz. Regarded as a model facility, it withstood several direct hits, as for example during the daylight raid by the US Air Force on June 21, 1944. (Historisches Museum Hannover)

Probably the most interesting shelter was the so-called Gaubefehlsstand (Gau Command Post) of Gauleiter Hartmann Lauterbacher which had been erected by Fritz Schuppert, a civil and structural engineering firm. This installation was divided into four interconnecting bunker complexes: (a) the Gauleiter's headquarters, (b) the Chief of Police's headquarters, (c) the hospital shelter, and (d) the civilian air raid shelter.

The regional headquarters of the Gau of Hannover-Süd-Braunschweig had previously been housed in the new town hall. However, it was moved to the shelter complex by the Ihme probably not earlier than 1943 after the first heavy raids, as headquarters were to be located inside shelters whenever possible. Gauleiter Lauterbacher wrote after the war: 'The regional headquarters in Hannover were exemplary'. At the beginning of November 1943, Goebbels came to Hannover and visited the shelter. According to Lauterbacher, he was 'immediately convinced' by the structure. 'He ordered his representative and all the Berlin experts to Hannover. In the end, many Gauleiter came to see it, for example from Oberdonau and Steiermark; Baldur von Schirach also came to visit us from Vienna.' Based on this pattern, smaller Kreisbefehlsstände (Party district command posts) were built in various cities in Lower Saxony, like for example in Braunschweig, Hildesheim, Syke and Göttingen.

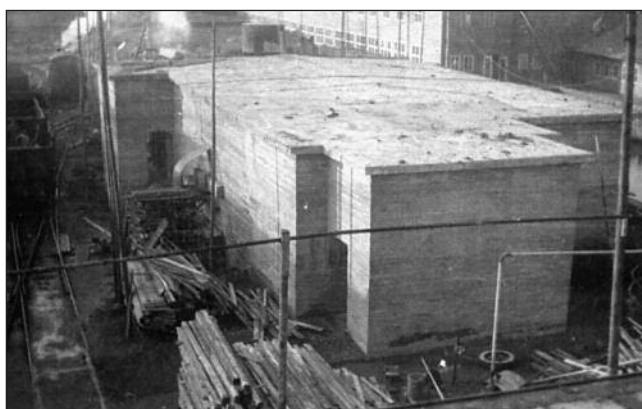
All areas with separate entrances were linked by underground passages but separated by doors. The civilian shelter area had accommodation for some 500 people. In the hospital shelter, a complete military infirmary was set up with a fully-equipped operating theatre as well as accommodation for surgeons and nursing sisters from the Siloah Hospital. Adjoining it was the police headquarters bunker from where emergency measures were to be taken if the main police station in Waterloostrasse should be hit. Finally there was the area of the 'Gau Command Post of the South Hannover — Braunschweig NSDAP' itself. This bunker was equipped with teleprinter circuits to the Party Chancellery in Munich, to the Ministry of Propaganda in Berlin and there were also two radio rooms.



In late 1948, the British Military Government ordered the Gaubefehlsstand to be blown up; then, on November 29, it was flooded and subsequently covered with rubble, and nothing remains of the complex today. The Niedersachsen Stadium now occupies the site, which is overlooked by the mound created by rubble from the city's bombed buildings, today landscaped into a pleasant hill.

Inside the Gau Command Post, the aerial situation was noted and tracked on a frosted-glass screen which was divided into squares. At a large plotting table, there were telephone links with the Luftwaffe in Leineschloss, the police headquarters, and to

Kippkphut to the east of Sarstedt where the new Gau CP was being built (following his inspection of civil defence, Lauterbacher had ordered the construction of a second Gau CP) and finally an internal telephone connection to the accommodation huts.



Left: A special category of air raid shelters were those built for the workforce of individual factories. The Vereinigte Leichtmetallwerke (United Light Metal Works) was founded in 1934 and soon regarded as an exemplary National Socialist business enterprise. During the war it manufactured sheet metal, rivets, tubes, bars and castings for aircraft and ship production. Just like Hanomag, this armaments firm employed many foreign workers. During alerts they were not allowed in the shelters



but were obliged to seek protection in trenches. It was not until 1944 that a special shelter was built for the workers. This single-storey shelter, part of Phase II of the building programme, could accommodate 1,000 persons. Joined to it was a round shelter accommodating the control room of the factory's air defence section and some fire-fighting equipment. (Bromann) Right: The best comparison possible today, taken from the extreme edge of the roof of an adjoining factory building.

The alternative Gau CP was on a hill and connected to the nearby 'Villa Steinburg'. According to a local conservationist, Werner Vahlbruch, this was built by guilds of tradesmen from Sarstedt and the surrounding area. Some 56,000 bricks from a brickworks in Algermissen were used. The transfer of the site to the Gau took place on November 6, 1944 at a monthly rent of 900 Reichsmarks. In line with its model in Hannover, the alternative HQ had the latest communications equipment. There was a plan — partly realised — for tunnels to be cut into the hillside. After 1945, the underground chambers were filled in and the entrances sealed. The shelter itself was demilitarised, and subsequently used as a store by the university of Hannover.

With its top covering 3.50 metres thick (other accounts give 2.50 metres) the Gau CP, along with the shelter in Friesenstrasse, was one of the most robust in Hannover. It was struck many times: on June 21, 1944, it received a direct hit. Records of the 6th Police District dated November 6, 1944, show that two unexploded bombs and an aerial mine were found: the former on top of the shelter and the latter by the entrance.

Girl pupils from the 11th class of the Wilhelm Raabe High School who had been drafted for emergency duties were based in the Gau CP and used as auxiliary helpers. The children were accommodated in nearby huts. In the final stages of the war, the Kampfkommandant of Hannover transferred his headquarters from Friederikenschlosschen to the Schützenplatzbunker, as the Gau CP was also called.

Command posts were also accommodated in other shelters: the local civil defence headquarters for Langenhagen was in the Hackethalstrasse shelter: that for Misburg was located in the Bahnhofstrasse shelter.

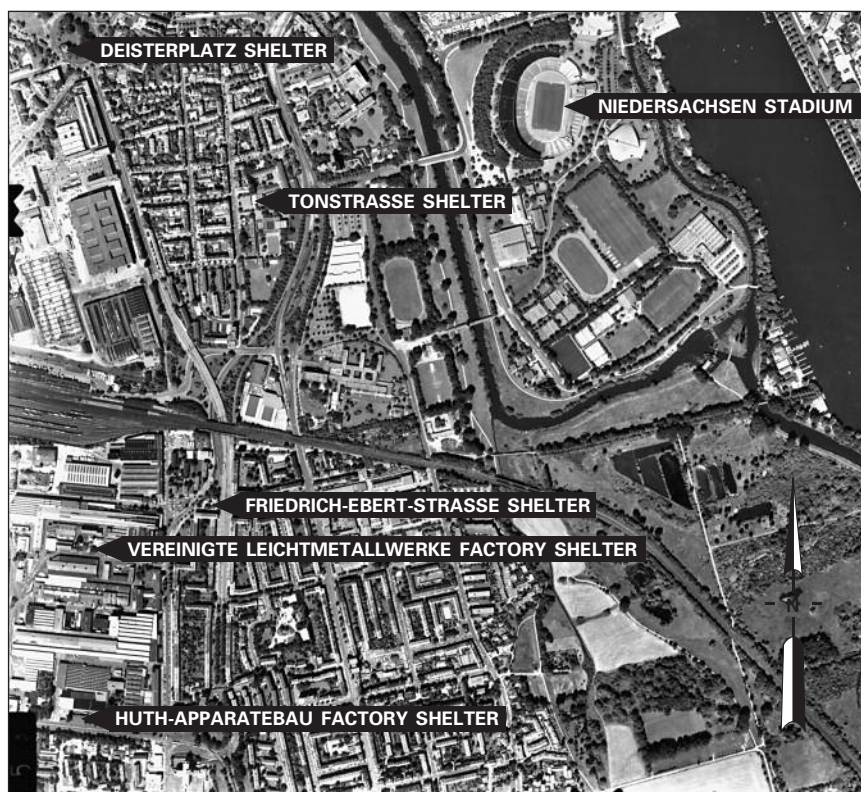
Locations were decided when architectural designs, plans and models had been prepared. Negotiations with land owners about purchase were carried out by Polizeioberinspektor Oskar Krohne. Whereas influential owners had to be treated with kid gloves, lesser mortals were put under considerable pressure. Into the former category came the wife of Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (Armed Forces High Command), whose family owned the land on which the shelter at Wölpfelde was built, and also the Hugenberg trustees, whose property was selected for the shelter at Lüneburger Damm.

The owner of another plot at Pfarrlandplatz, whose husband was in the army, engaged a lawyer to negotiate the purchase on her behalf. Krohne told the lawyer in no uncertain terms what would happen to him if he continued to represent his client. The lawyer caved in and approved the offer of 18 Reichsmarks per square metre for the plot, which was in the city and had an area of 434 square metres. However, another piece of land in a prime location destined for the Lönnsstrasse shelter belonged to the Jewish Community and was purchased for just two Reichsmarks per square metre. In other cases, the price per square metre ranged from 1.50 to 4 Reichsmarks. After 1945, many owners called for further compensation but such applications were generally rejected by the finance department which took over the affairs of the former Reich government and acted as a trust.

Right: The same section of Hannover as it looks today. Of the six shelters shown on the wartime photograph (excluding the tunnels under the Hanomag factory — today part of the Komatsu concern) five are still discernible today. Only the Gaubefehlsstand was blown up and cleared away, its place today taken by the Niedersachsen Stadium. Hoffmann-von-Fallersleben-Strasse has been renamed Friedrich-Ebert-Strasse. (Niedersächsisches Landesverwaltungsamt)



An aerial photograph of the southern part of Hannover taken by the US 7th Group on May 29, 1945 — three weeks after the German surrender. The area to the west of the Maschsee lake is nothing but craters. The lake itself, which was created by the Nazi authorities in 1934-36 as part of an unemployment relief programme, is still partly covered with camouflage netting to make it more difficult for Allied pilots to get their bearings. The area between the lake and the Ihme river, site of the Gaubefehlsstand, is also totally destroyed. The Hanomag armaments plant was singled out by the Allied air forces as a special target. It produced Panzer III and later also Panzer V (Panther) tanks, half-tracks, 12.8cm twin flak guns and railway guns. Hanomag's large 'U-Boot hall' is clearly visible. South of it lies the Hannover-Linden railway freight depot, which was also heavily hit. Adjacent to this are metalworking and instrument-making factories. Huth-Apparatebau manufactured communications equipment. Note the many fire-service emergency water reservoirs. (Keele University)





Left: Procurement of the sites chosen to build air raid shelters was achieved legally, although the authorities did not shirk from bringing a little pressure to bear. The wife of the owner of the land for this H II 4 shelter on Pfarrlandplatz in the Linden district (west of the city centre) settled for the lowest price after her representing lawyer was threatened by the police.



The photograph must have been taken after the first air raids had taken place as some of the roof tiles have clearly been renewed. (AMF) Right: After the war, the shelter lost its roof and the opening in its front was closed. In the mid-1990s flats were built on top of the roof and these are today greatly sought after as upmarket residences.

In addition to the German labour force, prisoners of war were set to work at most construction sites in Phase I: initially a force of 295 Belgians and subsequently Frenchmen. This labour force was recruited through the Wehrkreise (Military Districts) in collaboration with labour exchanges. Workers were accommodated in huttid camps at Bothfeld and Bemerode. The prisoners came from Stalag XI-B (Fallingbomel), XI-C/311 (Bergen-Belsen) and XI-D/321 (Oerbke). In March 1943, a total of 63 Arbeitskommandos with 5,000 POWs were at work in Hannover.

In 1940-41, army construction troops (Baubataillon 105) were also used on at least 15 sites. However, the acute labour shortage was to persist. As a result, work sometimes had to be stopped at some sites, including those at Wiehbergstrasse and Sallstrasse. On September 21, 1944, the Municipal President announced that the most urgent works at the Lindener Berg (shelter tunnels) and at the Wiehbergstrasse and Haltenhoffstrasse shelters were to be finished as they were already, respectively, 50, 75 and 90 per cent completed.

Again and again, the limited workforce was used for clearing-up operations following heavy air raids, especially after raids on the Deurag-Nerag refinery in Hannover-Misburg.

Many Hannoverians hoped that the RAF would not attack them. Theories and

rumours did the rounds as was the case in every other city: the British would not bomb Hannover because it had once come under the British royal family, Churchill had relatives in Hannover, or the British would need the living space after the end of the war.

It soon became apparent that this was nothing more than wishful thinking and illusion. Hannover had an important armaments industry and was a main junction on the west-east and north-south lines of communication. People tuned in to the 'Primadonna' flak transmitter which issued reliable reports of the approach of Allied aircraft and details of imminent raids. As the intensity of the raids increased, a certain routine set in: people would keep their 'shelter bag' ready at the bedside, they went to bed fully dressed and practised what to do in the event of an alert. At first, people took a lot of luggage with them but soon realised that this slowed them down. Moreover, excessive luggage was frowned upon due to the limited space available. There were frequent arguments and tears flowed. Frau Margot Pohle wanted to get into the shelter in Herrenhäuser Strasse: 'They never wanted to let me in because I had a case and a big bag. I'd been given two hats as presents and I had an overcoat and a jacket so I was a bit wide. They always said people shouldn't bring so much but I told them I was coming in with the lot because that was all I had. I had nothing else.'

Newspaper articles told people what they should bring in their 'shelter bags'. Generally ID cards and stocks and shares were put in together with money, ration books, jewellery, photographs, a change of underwear, a little something to eat and drink, and a blanket. Toys for the children and books were also recommended to occupy what were often long periods of waiting. As the crowding increased, people sometimes had to stand for hours on end and folding chairs would often be brought along.

As the enemy air offensive increased, the warning times got shorter and shorter and it would often happen that, in the panic to reach safety, mothers would leave their children behind. These were the worst of all times in the shelters. Soon people would run to just save their lives. When there was no warning, streets became littered with cases, bags and other pieces of luggage and between these lay overturned prams. People ducked down behind lumps of concrete or jumped into makeshift blast trenches.

People were relieved if they made it to the shelters. If you knew people, you might swap recipes and news about relatives. If people in the big city-centre shelters found themselves among strangers they mostly stayed silent or quietly exchanged a few words. If children could not sleep, their parents or other people would read them stories or play team games with them.



Left: Quite the opposite happened with the plot for the H II 4 shelter in Im Wölpfelde at the corner of Hildesheimer Strasse. Although the site was in a rural area, the Fontaine family, who owned the land, received an exorbitant RM 12,000 for it — perhaps because Luise Fontaine was the wife of Generalfeldmarschall Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the OKW. Construction started on November 12, 1940, and outfitting



the interior was completed on October 31, 1941. Some 4,000 persons sought shelter here during each alert in 1944. (AMF) Right: In 1946 the Im Wölpfelde shelter became a refugee camp run by the catholic charity Caritas. From July 1950, the German Red Cross ran it as a men's hostel; later it became a hostel for young people. After being sold, the shelter was converted to flats.



The entrance to the underground shelter at Am Klagesmarkt (see page 7) where on four separate occasions people were crushed or trampled to death trying to get inside.

However, increasingly the time spent in shelters became more agonising for the exhausted people whose nerves were shot to pieces. Ernst Jünger, the writer, wrote in the last year of the war: 'It's dreadful in there. People are squashed together like sardines. And as for the air! The space is filled with sighs, screams and groans; women faint. Children's faces are covered with cloths because the fear makes them sick and some lie trembling on the floor.'

The occupants reacted differently to fear: some prayed, others were overcome with sobbing fits, still more stood silently holding hands until the All Clear was given. People cursed the British, cracked dirty jokes or drank alcohol. Many found the shelters so unbearable that they refused to go back. This was especially the case with soldiers on leave from the front who found themselves defenceless in the face of imminent disaster.

The cacophony of war could be heard in the shelters, the whistling of bombs and the ever-approaching explosions during the so-called carpet bombing raids. When there were near-misses, the shelters started to sway and the occupants began to scream. The toilet flushes failed and the stench spread through passageways. You needed strong nerves to get through times like those.

When the ventilation system failed, volunteers turned cranks to bring in fresh air. In the Höfestrasse shelter, a woman was nearly



The lucky ones. Shelter occupants enjoying a hot meal during an alert. A picture taken in the Wolthusen shelter in the city of Emden, on the North-German coast. (D. Janssen)

scalped when her hair got caught in the mechanism.

Infectious diseases such as measles, diphtheria and TB spread because of the confined surroundings. Parasites such as lice and fleas were passed on and scabies became the shelter disease.

There were also deaths, especially due to heart attacks. One girl in the Friesenstrasse shelter had her lungs ripped apart by the blast of an exploding bomb.

However, the greatest loss of life occurred outside the shelters. On October 8/9, 1943, when the doors of the Continentalplatz underground shelter were closed on the night of the firestorm, a crowd assembled at the entrances shortly afterwards and screamed to be let in. The warden refused to relent and the doors remained shut. After the raid, as the occupants were led out by rescue workers, the many charred and shrivelled corpses could be seen lying in front.

The first case of panic occurred on the same night in front of the underground shelter on the Klagesmarkt. At least two women and a child were trampled or crushed to death. Witnesses remember with horror how, panic stricken, they ran over the dead and injured to get to the safety of the shelter door.

When on July 15, 1944, 42 Mosquitos appeared over Hannover without warning, panic once again resulted in loss of life at the Klagesmarkt underground shelter. In all

probability, 28 people, including six children, were killed on the steps as they went down. Over 300 people tried to get in. On July 22 Franziska Kassler wrote: 'Those at the bottom fell over because of the crush and everybody else just piled on. The men at the top kept jumping on and it turned into a wrestling mass of people and no one could get back out of the heap. The clothing was torn from the dead bodies.'

Many people lost their possessions in the panic. Shortly afterwards, a kind of lost property office was set up at the Klagesmarkt shelter where the survivors could retrieve their belongings such as shoes and stocking. The next panic followed on September 11 in front of the bunkers on Klagesmarkt (six deaths) and Rampenstrasse (11 deaths). There were a further 21 deaths on October 18, yet again in front of the underground Klagesmarkt shelter. In all, panic caused the deaths of at least 66 people in Hannover.

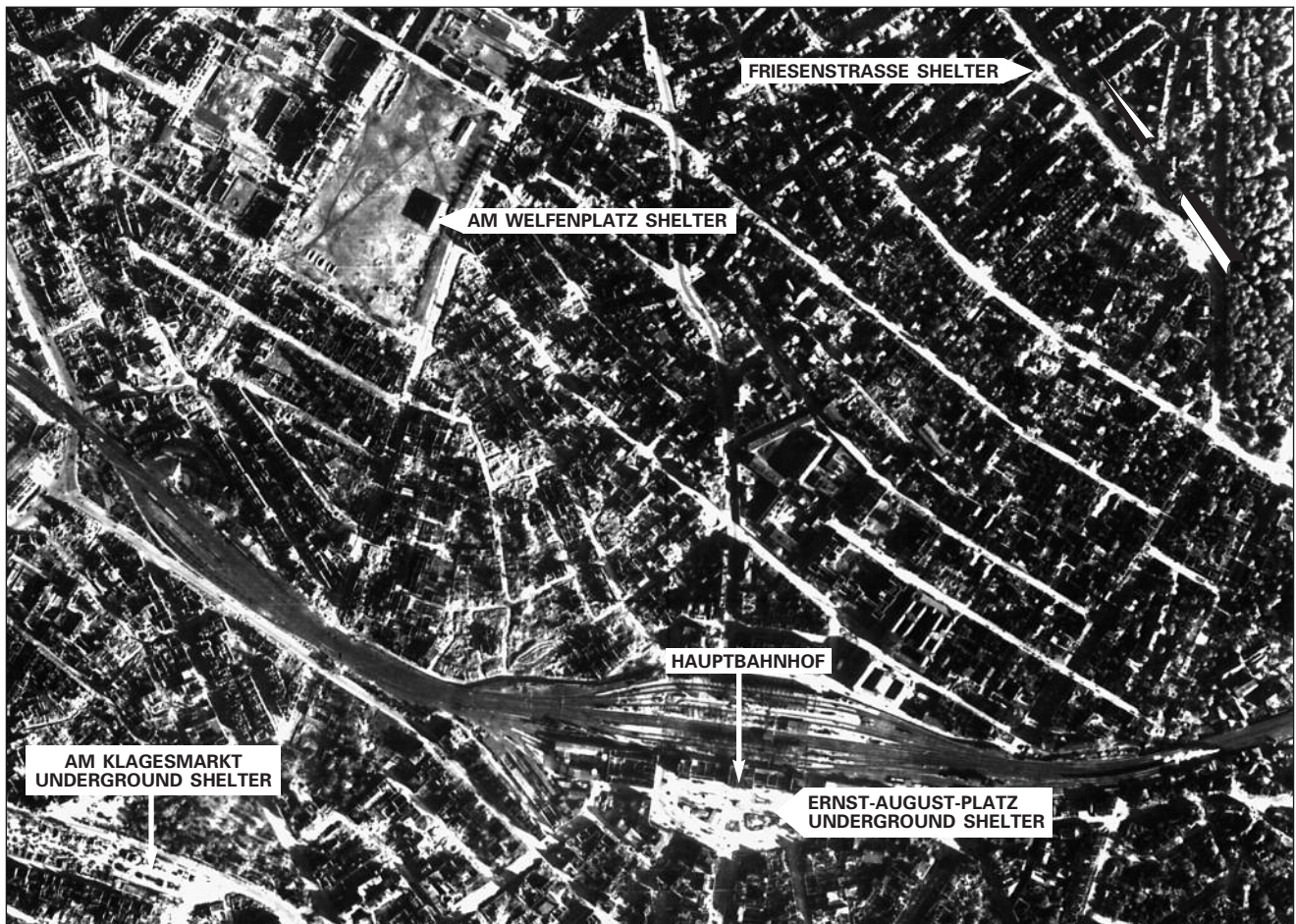
Sometimes people could not get out after raids because the doors had become so warped by the heat that they would not open. In other cases, there were deep craters directly in front of the entrances which made it impossible to leave quickly. The occupants of the shelter at Alt Vinnhorst witnessed something special: an unexploded bomb lying in front of the entrance. Everyone had to step carefully over it as they left pale-faced.



Left: The H II 3 shelter at Am Seelberg in the Misburg district was hit at least four times but never penetrated. It was first struck on June 20, 1944, and then again on August 24, when the tiled roof was blown away and the surrounding area turned into a mass of craters. The third and fourth hits occurred in late 1944



or early 1945. During one of the raids the shelter had to be evacuated for fear that burning oil from the nearby Deurag-Nerag refinery would engulf it. (AMF) Right: All craters have been filled and the open spaces built over. After 1945 the shelter was used for Civil Defence purposes and for storing building materials.



By 1945, Allied saturation bombing had destroyed 60 to 70 per cent of Hannover. The main part of the city was almost flat and only the outlying districts had been somewhat spared. Of the original population of 471,000, some 300,000 had been bombed out and 6,782 killed. The number of people still in the city was down to about 250,000 Germans plus some 60,000 foreigners

(foreign workers, slave labourers, Allied prisoners of war). In this aerial of the city centre taken on October 20, 1945, the area around the main railway station is a sea of ruins. Two tower shelters and two underground shelters can be seen, including the one with the strongest roof (up to 3.50 metres) in the Friesenstrasse. (Niedersächsisches Landesverwaltungsamt)

The air raid shelters in Hannover proved their worth. The author has found evidence of about 30 direct hits, none of which penetrated the concrete or caused deaths. The shelter at Am Seelberg in Misburg was hit four times: June 20, 1944; August 24, 1944; at the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945. After the first hit in June, the shelter had to be cleared as it was threatened by burning oil from the nearby Deurag-Nerag refinery.

Siegfried Engelhardt, who was a schoolboy at the time, was in the Am Seelberg shelter on August 24, 1944: 'The flak was going up and a couple of minutes had hardly gone by when there was a minor earthquake. You

could see that heavy shelter swaying. It swayed so much you felt you had to get a grip on yourself. Bombs were going off and getting nearer and nearer. You could really feel they were coming towards the shelter. It was getting worse and worse. Then we got hit by one which I am sure rolled away across the top. It got nearer and nearer and then there was a heavy great bang and it all started to shake and the shelter filled up with clouds of dust. Another bomb fell in front and just blew the doors off.' Shortly afterwards the fire brigade sent an appliance with a ladder. Engelhardt had been right about the shelter having been hit on the roof. 'There was a

shallow hollow full of small grains of cement in the top of the shelter. The explosion had just destroyed the roof trusses, which were partly blown away. You could see bits of explosive on the chimney stack.'

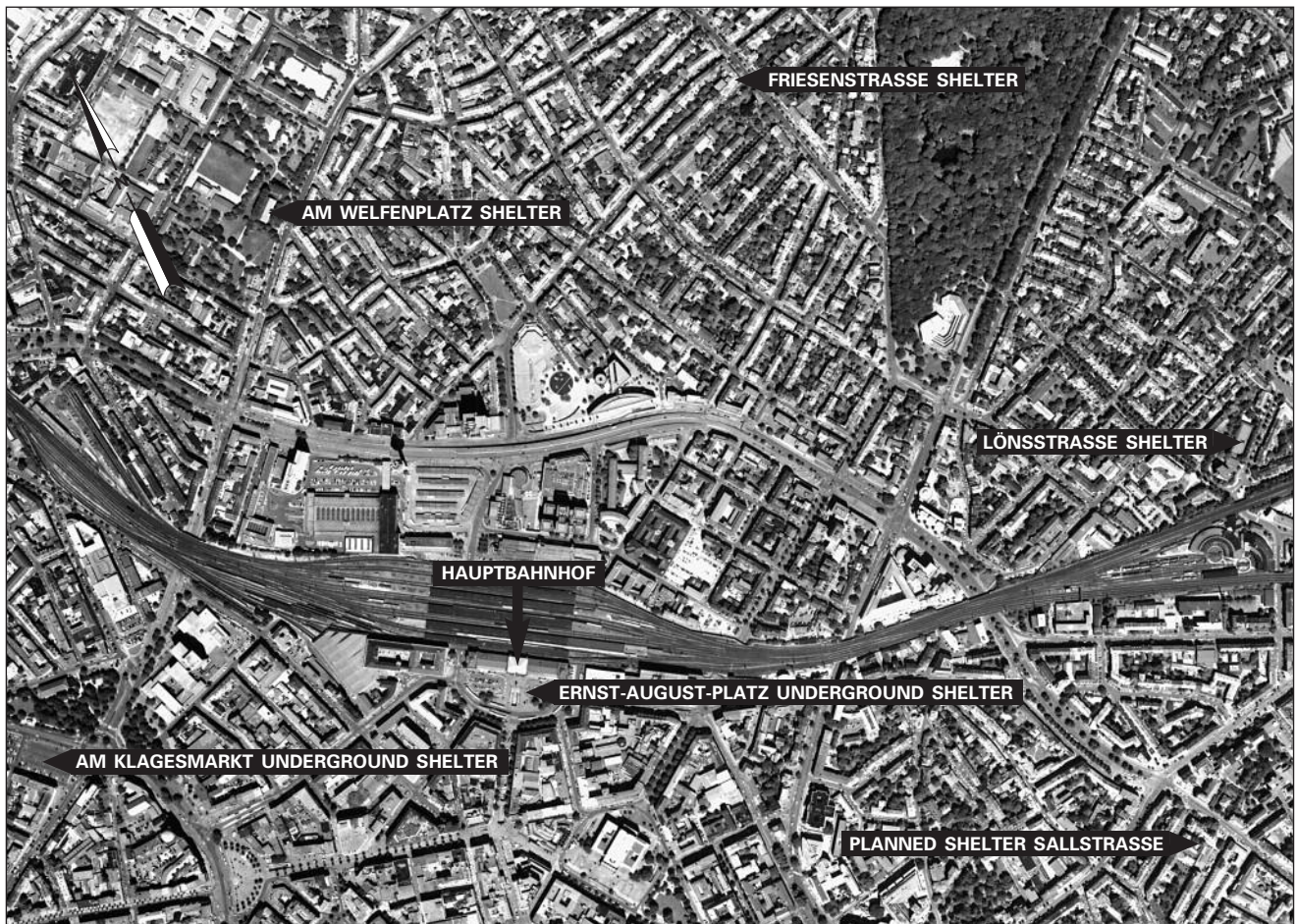
Professor Elkart had informed Gauleiter Lauterbacher on November 1, 1943 that Hannover's shelters had withstood the Allied bombing. However, no bombs of very high calibre had been dropped on the city as for example happened in Bremen. Nevertheless, one incident still remains unclear: during the first daylight raid on Hannover by the Americans on July 26, 1943, 110 people were killed in the underground shelter at the Con-



Left: The only shelter that the British blew up in its entirety was the one in the Hackenthalstrasse, in the devastated industrial area of Vahrenheide (north of the city centre). Its isolated posi-



tion meant that detonation could be carried out without the need to worry about surrounding buildings. (Stadtarchiv Langenhagen) Right: The Autohaus Olenik now stands on the site.



The inner city was totally redesigned after the war, as this aerial photograph of July 1, 1993 illustrates. North of the main railway station the Frankfurter Allee now runs parallel to the tracks. (Niedersächsisches Landesverwaltungsamt)

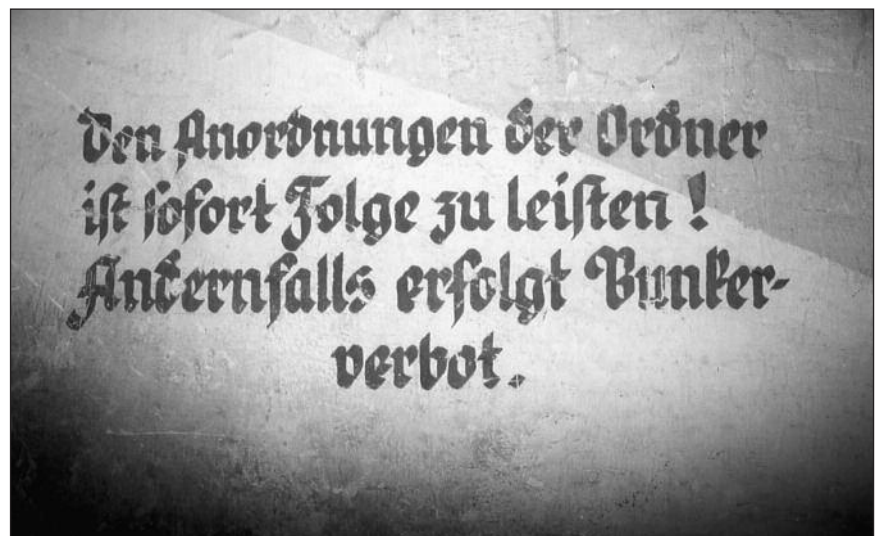
tinentalplatz. Was the shelter penetrated by the bombs? Did the victims meet their deaths in front of the shelter or because the doors were open? These questions remain unanswered to this day. An investigation after 1945 revealed cracks in the top and furthermore it had filled with water. These point to a direct hit with dreadful consequences, but there is no conclusive proof.

In all, Hannover had 735 alerts and the city itself was attacked 125 times. The RAF dropped 14,778 tonnes of bombs and the US Eighth Air Force 8,275 tonnes — a total of nearly a million bombs. Damage from air raids amounted to ten thousand million Reichsmarks. The number of deaths was 6,782, at least six per cent of whom were foreigners. Dr Walter Hencke has compiled a list of 431 foreign victims from the reports in the daily newspapers. Probably far more foreigners were killed. The card index of deaths due to air raids in Hannover shows 113 Poles alone.

The last time the people of Hannover took to the shelters was on April 10, 1945. Warning was given that tanks were coming. This was the day when troops of the US 84th Infantry Division occupied the city in the face of little resistance. Frau Lieselotte Tiemann lived out her final shelter hours in Rupsteinstrasse in the Kleefeld district: 'At about 11.30 a.m., a civilian rushed into the shelter shouting that the Chief of Police had surrendered Hannover without a fight and that the war was over. Everybody ran out. Strangers embraced each other, crying. I did the same. I thought of my brothers who had been killed in the war for nothing at all, and of my missing and dead relatives.'

After 1945, nearly all the shelters were used for emergency accommodation and storage. The railway station shelter became internationally infamous as the 'sluice of wretchedness': here between 1945 and 1950 over 1.2 million displaced people received aid from workers of the German Red Cross and other humanitarian organisations. According to decree No. 22 of the Allied Control Commission dated December 6, 1945, the shelters in Hannover were to be blown up. In tough wrangling with the British Military Government, a decommissioning agreement was reached whereby a certain percentage of the enclosing walls would be removed by explosives. To carry out the

decommissioning, a special Building Control Office was established in November 1946. Later the shelters were partially restored for civil defence purposes and at considerable costs re-equipped. Only a few disappeared completely: the former Gau Command Post was flooded and blown up in 1948 and the Niedersachsen Stadium was later built on the site. The Hackenthalstrasse shelter was totally destroyed in a test explosion carried out by the Disarmament Branch and, together with the one in Blumenauerstrasse, gave way to new building developments. Today, many shelters are used for private or cultural purposes and are privately owned.



Wartime signs remain on the interior walls of almost every shelter, like this one pictured in the tower bunker on Deisterplatz: 'The instructions of the warden are to be obeyed immediately. If not, one will be banned from the bunker'.



From October 1943 to April 1945, the Villa Feltrinelli on the western shore of Lake Garda in northern Italy, was the official residence of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini in his capacity as head of the puppet government that had been established under German protection and was known as the Fascist Republic

of Salò. On April 30, 1945, soldiers of the US 10th Mountain Division launched a small amphibious attack from across the lake and took possession of the villa. To their disappointment, they did not catch Mussolini, the Duce having vacated the premises 12 days earlier. This is how the villa looked in 1945.

THE CAPTURE OF MUSSOLINI'S LAST RESIDENCE

In late April 1945, spearheading the Allied advance through northern Italy, soldiers of the US 10th Mountain Division, part of the IV Corps of the US Fifth Army, arrived at the picturesque Lake Garda. In these closing weeks of the war, they had the struggling German army on the retreat as they pushed their way into the heart of the last Axis stronghold in Italy and eventually into the very home of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini.

The area around the Lago di Garda (as the Italians know the lake) was the seat of the Salò Republic, newly formed in October 1943 and headed by Mussolini. Hitler was using Mussolini as a leader of a puppet government to help rally what Fascist support remained and more importantly to protect Germany's southern flank. After his rescue from exile by a squad of German Fallschirmjäger led by SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Skorzeny (see *After the Battle* No. 22) on September 12, 1943, the new government's headquarters and Mussolini's personal residence were established in the Villa Feltrinelli, which sat on the western shore of Lake Garda near the town of Gargnano, some ten miles north of Salò.

Built in 1892, the villa was owned by members of the prominent Feltrinelli family who had made their fortune in the lumber industry. They had lived in the beautiful home until the German Army confiscated it in October 1943. The Germans assigned 30 SS guards to watch over Mussolini's every move and militarised the villa's grounds. They dug a bomb shelter with cemented walls, erected gun emplacements including several anti-aircraft weapons, and the villa itself was given a coat of German field-grey camouflage paint.

Mussolini was not so much a resident of the villa as he was a prisoner. Surrounded by German soldiers and having every decision scrutinised by the German commanders, he seemed very aware of his status. The embattled dictator referred to the Villa Feltrinelli as a 'dark and gloomy place', a statement more aptly a reflection of the current stage of his political life than a description of his

By Bryan Pullen

new home. He often found solace with his long-time mistress, Claretta Petacci, who had been conveniently moved into the nearby Villa Fiordaliso, located seven miles further to the south at the village of Gardone Riviera.



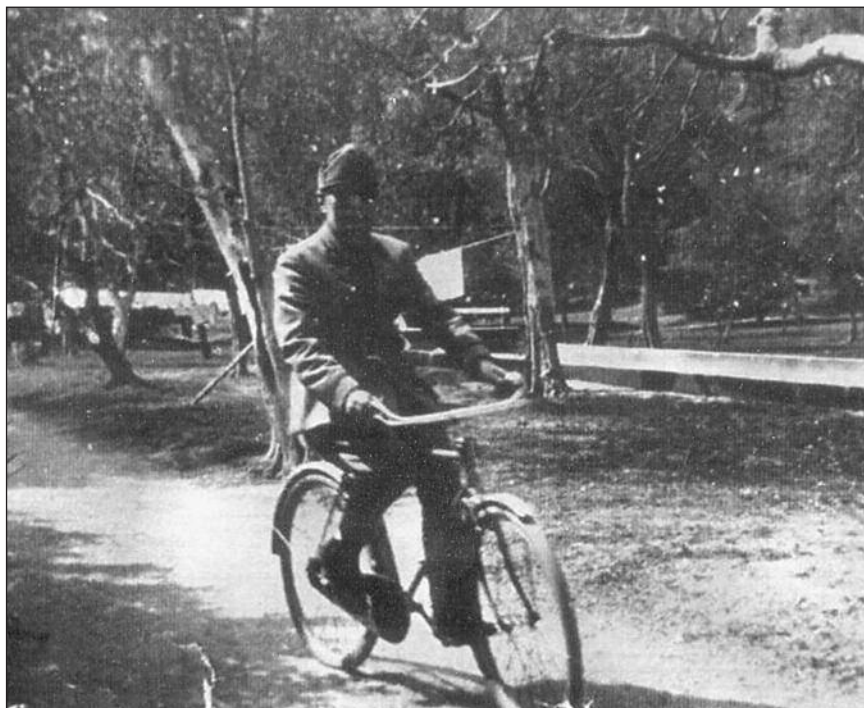
Today, the historic house is the Grand Hotel Villa Feltrinelli. Having stood empty for 20 years, the building at No. 38-40 Via Rimemberanza was completely restored and refurbished before being reopened as a hotel in 2001. The outside is basically unchanged except for the tower, which disappeared shortly after the war.

Leaving the Villa Feltrinelli for the final time on April 18, 1945, Mussolini entered the drawing room where his son, Romano, was playing *The Blue Danube* on the piano. He bid his wife Rachele and family farewell, simply telling them he was off to Milan for a conference. The next contact with him was on April 23, when Mussolini spoke to Rachele on the phone telling her to flee the villa, and move the family to the old royal residence at Monza. There they were to be re-united with him at Lake Como north of Milan but the meeting never took place. Along with his mistress, the Duce was captured and executed by Italian partisans near Lake Como on April 28 (see *After the Battle* No. 7).

That same day, April 28, the soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division, who had already faced tough opposition in the heavily fortified northern Apennine mountains and Po river valley, were greeted at Lake Garda by determined enemy resistance. The Germans, now at a critical point in the war, were not quite ready to leave the country altogether so they put up what would be their last stand in Italy.

Explosives had demolished the first of the six tunnels along the road on the lake's eastern coast, slowing the advance of the 86th Mountain Infantry Regiment until DUKW amphibious trucks were called up to circumvent the blown tunnel. As they travelled in the open water, anti-aircraft shells exploded overhead raining shrapnel and killing at least one soldier.

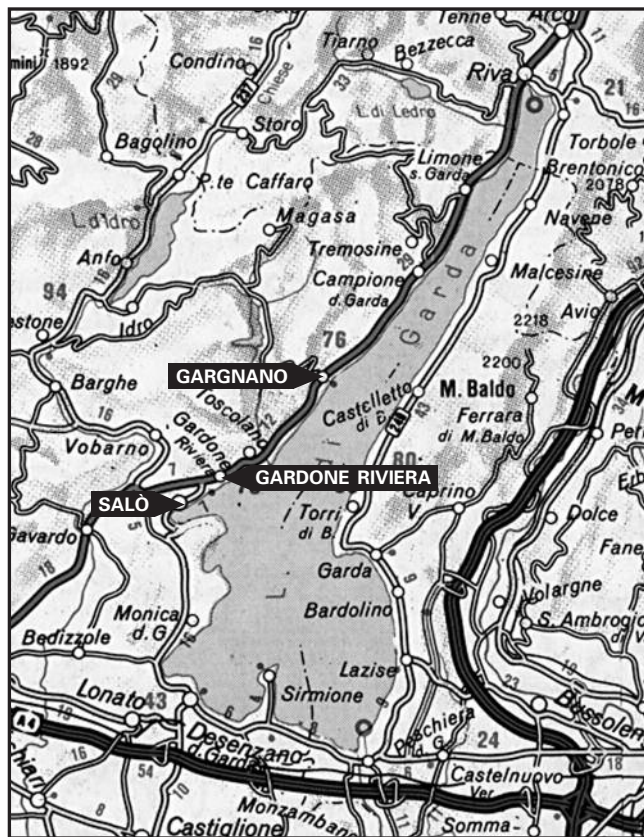
Once on shore, the men continued up the highway. On April 29, while members of the 86th Regiment were entering the fifth tunnel, a precisely fired German 88mm shell exploded inside, killing four soldiers and wounding many more. Adding to the horror of the scene were the bodies of 12 German soldiers, victims of a failed attempt to sabotage the tunnel with explosives.



Pictures of Mussolini at the Villa Feltrinelli are rare. This one of the Duce riding a bicycle is reputed to have been taken in the grounds.

That same day, April 29, preparations began to capture Mussolini's villa — or 'castle' as many of the soldiers called it. Lying across the lake, on the west side of it, the villa had been under surveillance by the Allies since their arrival. The operation could prove to be quite perilous since, just the prior day, German soldiers had been

spotted moving north along the highway. Several unusual structures, whitish-grey in colour, were seen near the villa, and were perceived to be some type of military fortifications or bunkers. In addition, looming ominously on the villa itself was a large turret-like structure, perfect for positioning machine guns or anti-aircraft artillery.



The Villa Feltrinelli was located in the town of Gargnano. In all, there are over 70 villas, houses and other buildings associated with Mussolini and the Salò Republic along the south-western shores of Lake Garda between Salò and Gargnano.



One house of special importance to Mussolini was the Villa Fiordaliso at Gardone Riviera where his mistress Clara Petacci was installed in the so-called Red Salon on the second floor. Located at No. 150 Via Zanardelli, the villa is now also a hotel.



Selected to lead the operation was 25-year-old Lieutenant Eugene Hames, in charge of the 1st Platoon in the 85th Regiment's Company K. The initial plan was for Hames and ten men from his platoon to cross the lake in the middle of the afternoon by motorboat and capture the villa. However, the operation was soon to be altered from its original conception.

As Lieutenant Hames was in the platoon area selecting men for the mission, a Jeep containing a colonel in the passenger seat drove up. It was Colonel William O. Darby, the Assistant Division Commander. Although just 34 years old, Darby was already a legendary warrior and commander. Before coming to the 10th Mountain Division, he had trained and commanded the 1st Ranger Battalion, which fought valiantly through North Africa. Later he had led the 1st, 3rd and 4th Ranger Battalions in the Sicily, Salerno and Anzio invasions.

Asked by Darby to brief him on the platoon's mission, Hanes explained the operational plan. Patiently listening to all the details, the colonel responded, 'I do not like this, lieutenant.'

'I don't either, Sir', Lieutenant Hames replied frankly. The colonel decided it would be best to postpone the mission, until an alternative plan was established.

Darby, who quite possibly saved the lives of the original 11 men by delaying the mission, would never have a chance to hear of its successful execution. He was killed by a German artillery shell on the very day of the villa's occupation, April 30, while standing outside the 86th Regiment's command post in Torbole.

However, before Darby's death, the orders were changed substantially. First, a special task force, commanded by Major Eric Wikner, acting commander of the 86th Regiment's 3rd Battalion, was formed to carry out the mission. This assault force would be much stronger than the squad-size force originally assigned and consist of all of Company K, under Captain Richard Cooper, reinforced by one heavy machine gun platoon from Company M, under 1st Lieutenant Henry Bogin. With Germans spotted across the lake, the additional firepower of their .30-calibre machine guns might well be needed. Second, the operation was now scheduled to take place at night instead of during daylight as in the original plan. Third, the orders were to have the task force travel across the lake in six DUKWs instead of in motorboats.



In the early hours of April 30, a special task force, consisting of Company K of the 85th Mountain Regiment and a heavy machine gun platoon from Company M of the same regiment, crossed Lake Garda in six DUKW amphibians to assault and capture the Villa Feltrinelli. No photographs of that night crossing exist but this picture taken by division photographer Bill Thompson during a later daytime crossing of the lake gives a good impression. (Denver Public Library)

Around 0130 hours on April 30, the DUKWs departed the 'duckhead' at San Zeno with the troops aboard. Sputtering along in a staggered formation, they took one hour to cross the four miles of open water. Although the darkness concealed their positions, the noise of the crafts' grinding engines eliminated any hope of a surprise attack. Hames: 'I recall thinking that what we were about to do was comparable to going pheasant hunting while riding on a Ford tractor.'

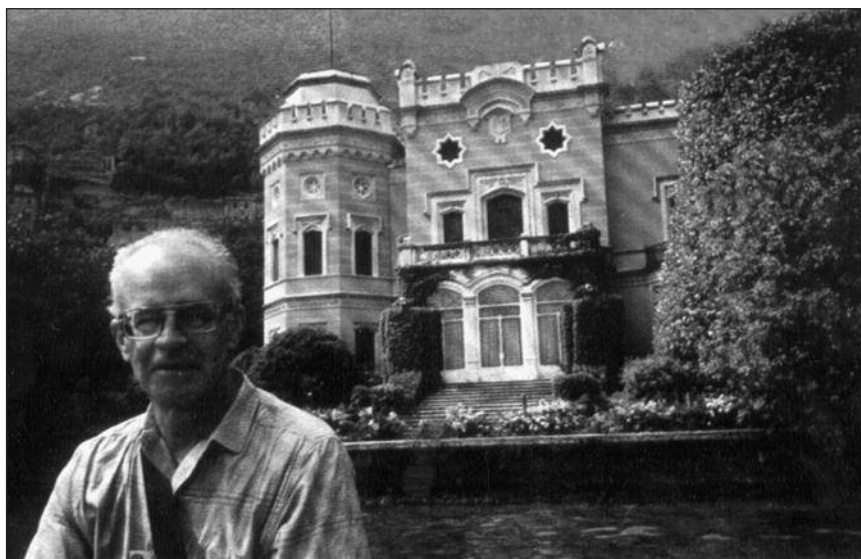
Reaching the opposite bank two miles north of the villa, the engines were cut and the DUKWs glided ashore. The men proceeded to unload, as quickly as possible, assuming that if the Germans launched a counter-attack it would begin by a shelling of the landing area. The DUKWs were left at

the landing area in the event a withdrawal or evacuation was needed. As the men moved towards the road, they encountered terraces, which were several feet high. They clamoured up them and pressed on towards the villa.

The night was very dark and an elderly Italian man approached them on a bicycle. Fortunately, he was not shot by some of the startled soldiers and he informed them the Germans had left town the previous day. This was the German movement Lieutenant Hames had observed. Pressing on towards the villa, much to their amusement and relief, they discovered that the unusual fortification that had been spotted was actually a lemon orchard or 'limonaia'. Its whitish-grey rock columns had wooden beams running between them, which supported the fruit as it grew.



Lieutenant Eugene Hames, leader of the 1st Platoon of Company K, who led the assault on the house.



Hames in front of the villa on a return visit to Italy in 1985. Hames was originally to have assaulted the villa with just ten of his men and during daytime but, to the relief of all, this plan was soon shelved.

Arriving in the villa grounds, several squads continued forward to the town of Gargnano. Several road-blocks were set up along the winding roads while Lieutenant Hames formed a perimeter around the property. Posting guards at the back entrance, he cautiously entered the villa through the front door with a few others.

Making their way into the house, they found it as if Mussolini had just stepped out for the evening. All of his personal belongings and other items were still in place. The large kitchen was stocked with food, and the bedrooms were lavishly furnished, complete with clean sheets on the beds. With his dress uniforms still hanging in the closet, Mussolini's bedroom was quickly established as a command post.

One room that appeared to be a pharmacy gave evidence to Mussolini's failing health near the end of the war. It contained numerous kinds of pills and various medications including those to aid his suffering from a duodenal ulcer and blocked bile duct. While at the villa, he even had a German doctor, Dr George Zachariae, assigned to him by Hitler's physician, Professor Theo Morell, who gave him vitamin injections and hormones.

Inside the grand dining room, the enormous table had its place settings laid out as if a meal was to be served soon. Private First Class Harold 'Bud' Sutton, a machine gunner from Company M, was among those entering the dining room. He recalled: 'Hanging above the table was the most beautiful chandelier I ever saw.'

Several items of historical note were found in the villa. Swords presented to 'Il Duce' from Hitler and Japanese emperor Hirohito were found, along with his priceless Stradivarius violin. Various medals were also discovered, one from a mountain climbing school, another a gift from Pope Pius XII. Many of these items were 'liberated' by the visiting soldiers. Most of these artefacts made their way back to the United States and are still part of personal collections.

Elsewhere around the grounds, the soldiers continued to find other luxury items, but unlike those inside, these had not been left for the comfort and use of the new occupants. The dock in front of the villa was intact, but a beautiful boat with an inboard motor had been destroyed and lay partially submerged. Two black limousines sat in the large garage, their engines ruined by strategically placed phosphorus grenades. Pfc Sutton decided to remove a large spotlight from one of the automobiles, taking it as a souvenir. After several burdensome days of lugging the heavy spotlight around in his backpack, it was unceremoniously discarded along the road to Trieste.

By 0815 hours, the villa was secured as ordered, without a shot having been fired. The men spent the following week exploring the surrounding villages and enjoying the villa, even taking turns sleeping in Mussolini's large bed. Many went into Gargnano to purchase souvenirs, mail correspondence, eat meals, and get a hot shower.

On May 2, while still at the villa, the news they had been longing for was finally heard: 'The German Army in Italy has surrendered.' The men were elated by the news but were again nervous as they were ordered to move to Udine in north-eastern Italy, near Trieste. Along with the British Eighth Army, they were to prevent any further westward movement by Yugoslavia's forces (see *After the Battle* No. 109). Eventually, the communists relented by evacuating the area, thus ending the war for the soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division. The division's total casualty losses while in Italy were 975 men killed in action and 3,891 wounded in action. Included in this number were the 62 killed and 270 wounded that occurred during the battle for Lake Garda.



Pfc Harold 'Bud' Sutton who was part of Company M's machine gun platoon, and one of the men who entered the house. He is the grandfather of our author Bryan Pullen.

After the war, ownership of the villa transferred back to the Feltrinelli family. Giangiacomo Feltrinelli was the leader of the family's publishing house who later joined the communist party. He was a candidate for the Italian elections in 1948 and used the villa to promote political propaganda. He later founded an ultra-left splinter group, the *Gruppa di Azzione Proletaria* (GAP), which engaged in terrorist action. Upon Giangiacomo's death in 1972 (he blew himself up when placing a bomb at a high-tension mast near Milan), the villa stood mostly uninhabited for 20 years until his son Carlo decided to sell it to a party outside the Feltrinelli family.

In 1997, American hotelier Bob Burns purchased the villa and it underwent a five-year restoration project. Due to the villa's historical significance, the restoration included negotiations with Italian preservation authorities and also with Mussolini's granddaughter Alessandra Mussolini, daughter of Romano and MP for the neo-fascist National Alliance, who believed the property could serve as a memorial to her famous grandfather.

Opened in September 2001, it is now the Grand Hotel Villa Feltrinelli and is open for accommodations to the public. Although the rates are higher than the average tourist may budget, the more seasoned traveller will enjoy their time at the villa in one of its 13 guestrooms, each of which features its own bathroom with heated marble floors, and two of which have outdoor terraces. Over 70 pieces of original antique furniture can be found throughout the villa.



Men of the 10th Mountain Division relaxing on the terrace of one of the many country houses along Lake Garda that were rightly or wrongly labelled 'Mussolini's villa'. (Denver Public Library)

Napkin taken by Pfc Sutton from Mussolini's table in the Villa Feltrinelli's grand dining room. One of the many souvenirs appropriated by the 10th Mountain Division men in the villa.

Other public rooms include a library; a film cabinet featuring a large plasma video screen and offering a variety of films; and a beautiful salon featuring ceiling frescos and a grand piano. Hotel guests can enjoy personal tours of Lake Garda aboard *La Contessa*, the villa's own 52-foot luxury boat, and have therapeutic massages either indoors or outdoors. Inside the hotel's eight-acre park are lighted paths, a croquet green, the original limonaia built in the late 1800s (which are the structures the soldiers observed in 1945) and four individual guesthouses for people who wish to have a more private stay but still enjoy the beauty of the villa. Each of these offers their own unique décor and are named *La Limonaia*, *Casa di Fiori*, *Casa Rustica*, and *The Boat House*.

The cemented bomb shelter that was dug by the German soldiers now houses large generators, which help supply power to the villa. However, one feature now absent is the large turret-like structure, which was taken down sometime after the end of the war but before the purchase by Mr Burns.

The occupation of Benito Mussolini's final residence has been tucked away deep in the annals of Second World War history, and the story is relatively unknown outside of the circle of 10th Mountain Division veterans and their descendants. It has been long overdue that the story of this unique small-unit operation was shared publicly with those outside this circle. For the men who participated, they will forever proudly recall the day they captured 'Mussolini's Castle'.



A RELIC FROM THE BATTLE OF LEROS

Almost precisely 60 years after the battle of Leros (see *After the Battle* No. 90), a Ju 52 transport aircraft shot down during the German assault on the island was raised by the Greek Air Force Museum from a depth of over 120 feet in Alinda Bay.

Following the Italian surrender on September 8, 1943, the British landed forces on the Italian islands of Kos, Leros and the Italian-occupied Samos to exploit the seemingly favourable situation. The Germans reacted very promptly and took Kos in a surprise landing on October 3. However, having lost many landing craft, it was not until Novem-

ber 12 that they were able to mount a landing to capture Leros. It was a combined air and sea operation with a parachute battalion dropping on the narrow neck of the island between Gurna Bay in the west and Alinda Bay in the east. The landing was bitterly opposed by the British garrison, with the outcome in the balance for several days until the Germans sent in fresh reinforcements on November 16.

The Ju 52 which lay submerged in the middle of Alinda Bay had been known to exist for a long time as it could be seen from the surface when the sea was calm. I heard of its

By Dr Peter Schenk

existence during my first visit to the island in 1992. Later two Greek divers, Vasilis Mento-
giannis and Kostas Kouvas, took very good underwater photos of the wreck which were published in a Greek magazine. The Ju 52 lay upside down on the seabed and was in very good condition apart from the missing undercarriage and central engine broken from its mountings. The divers had spotted that there were human bones in the cabin and they asked me for help in the identification.

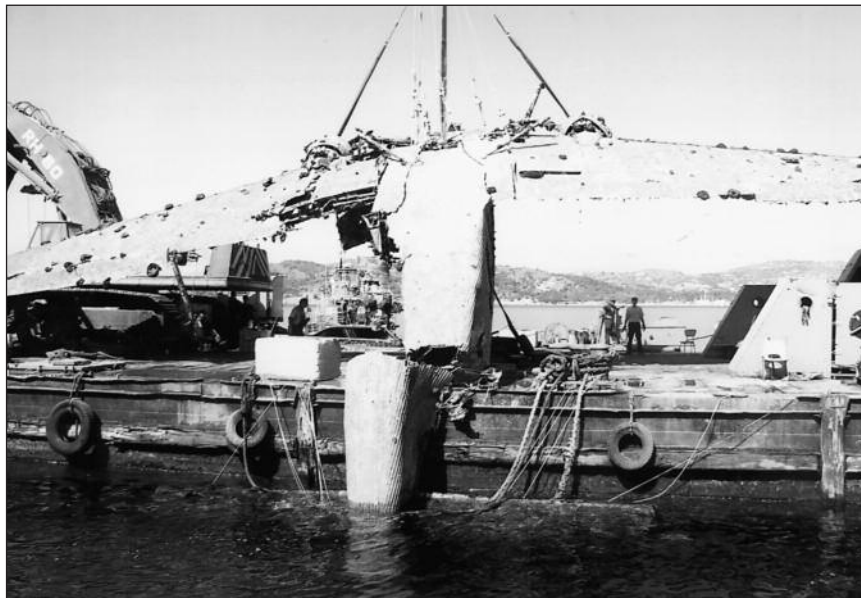


After lying on the seabed of Alinda Bay off the island of Leros in the Aegean for 60 years, a Junkers Ju 52 was brought ashore

in October 2003 in an operation by a recovery team from the Greek Air Force led by Captain Iannis Karadanis, left.



Unfortunately the centre engine of the tri-motor transport had broken off during the crash on November 14, 1943 and the tail



unit snapped off as it was lifted onto the barge due to the weight of the silt inside.



Once aboard, the barge was moved to the Naval base in Lakki harbour on the far side of the island where it was craned ashore. Here the engines are being removed prior to the remains being loaded onto road transport for the journey to the mainland.

Four Ju 52s were lost during the battle. One crashed on land on November 12 during the air drop of the battalion, this being G6+CH (W.Nr. 6763) of Transport-Geschwader 4 with one of the crew escaping wounded. (A wheel from this aircraft is now preserved in the historical museum of Leros at Villa Bellini at Alinda.)

The next morning, when the remaining paratroops and the 15. Kompanie of the Brandenburgers were brought in, two more Ju 52s were shot down. The first, G6+FP (W.Nr. 6799), ditched to the north of Alinda Bay with the paras still inside. One of the crewmen had been mortally wounded but the remainder, and some of the paratroopers, were rescued. The other aircraft, W.Nr. 640187, also from Transport-Geschwader 4, came down in the sea with one of her crew mortally wounded.

However, when the wrecked Ju 52 in Alinda bay was finally salvaged in October 2003, it turned out to be the fourth of the lost Ju 52s, 8T+CP bearing the Werk-Nummer 7607 of Transport-Geschwader 2 which had crashed on November 14. (Another Ju 52

from the same unit was damaged that day over Leros.)

This crash had been observed by Lieutenant Folland of the Long Range Desert Group from his observation post on Mt Markelos at 2.40 p.m.: 'One Ju shot down in sea 3 miles out 20°'. Its precise mission is not recorded but as no paratroops were observed or reported, it was most probably returning from a resupply mission as empty hooks were still in place on the static wire in the cabin.

Another problem concerns the identity of the remains found inside the plane. The first German loss report at the end of November states that the radio operator, Unteroffizier Herwarth Mandelkow, was hit and sank with the plane but the flight engineer, Unteroffizier Kurt Hanuschek, made a successful escape only to succumb from his wounds a day later. However, in a follow-up report dated May 1944, the details have been altered and now Hanuschek is stated to have gone down with the plane and Mandelkow is the one who was buried on Leros. After the war the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge transferred his remains to the permanent German War Cemetery at Athens-Dionysos, while a memorial plaque was provided for the missing Hanuschek.



Of the 4,845 production aircraft, most Ju 52s were powered by three 830hp BMW nine-cylinder air-cooled radial engines.



Before it was recovered the precise identity of the aircraft was not certain as four Ju 52s had been lost during the battle. In the event it proved to be 8T+CP of Transport-Geschwader 2.

The original ex-factory coding for this aircraft — Werk-Nummer 7607 — was DJ+KG and the aircraft also bore 4V+BT of another transport squadron at one time.





Left: The radio operator, Unteroffizier Herwarth Mandelkow, once sat here. Right: Had the Ju 52 been carrying paratroopers they would have clipped their static lines to these hooks. The precise task that 8T+CP was undertaking on November 14 has yet to be determined.



Spare drums for the on board armament — two MG81s. (Note that the fuselage was lying upside down when Peter took the photographs.)



Restoration work already underway at the Greek Air Force Museum at Athens-Tatoi/Dekelia.



ONE OF IRELAND'S AVIATOR HEROES

By Andy Saunders

Of the many thousands of losses sustained by RAF fighter Command during the Second World War, a considerable percentage may be attributed to accident rather than through combat or enemy action. Pilot error, bad weather, collision or mechanical failure all took their toll and into the latter category fell the mishap which overtook 21-year-old Sergeant Pilot John McAdam of No. 41 Squadron as he took off in his Spitfire, No. P9512, from RAF Hornchurch, Essex, on Saturday, October 12, 1940.

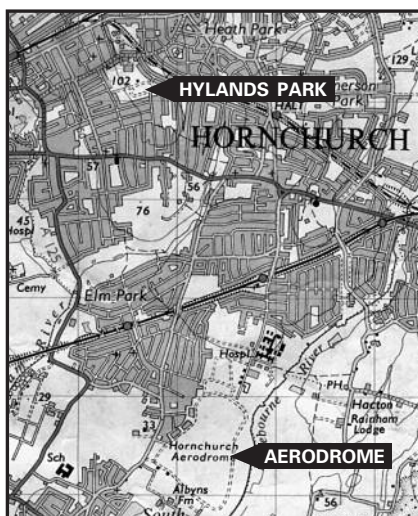
Although born in Gillingham, Kent, John McAdam was an Ulsterman and hailed from

Whitehead, near Belfast, where he had been a student of Electrical Engineering at Queen's University before the war. From Queen's he enlisted in the RAF (VR) on April 28, 1939, before being called up for permanent service on September 1 that year. After a short spell at No. 4 Initial Training Wing, Bexhill, John moved on to No. 6 Service Flying Training School at Little Rissington where he earned his wings on April 29, 1940, prior to posting to No. 6 Operational Training Unit on June 19. On July 1 he was posted to an operational Spitfire squadron, No. 41, at RAF Catterick. Soon the Battle of

Britain got into full swing and the squadron moved south to Hornchurch on July 26 where, despite a further spell back north in August, John became a battle-hardened veteran of air fighting during the hectic months of September and October.

The events of October 12, 1940, are best told in John's own words, written in a letter to his mother and father on Tuesday, October 15.

'Dear Mum and Dad, It might interest you



Top: John McAdam pictured in 1940 shortly after his posting to No. 41 Squadron at RAF Hornchurch. He named his Spitfire 'Pop' — a popular cartoon character at the time and also the affectionate name by which John knew his father. In one of his letters home, John says that 'the Squadron Leader isn't quite sure if he approves of pilots having motorbikes. Apparently if we break our necks, we may as well do it in action!'

Hornchurch, a grass aerodrome established on the eastern outskirts of London during the First World War, and a vital cog in the wheel of Britain's defence in World War II, was closed in 1962. (See *After the Battle* No. 30.) Sold for gravel extraction, when the deposits were exhausted, the quarry was backfilled with household refuse. Above: Now everything has been swept away . . . save for this E-pen on the northern side.

to know that I've done it again. On Saturday last. On taking off with the rest of the squadron for a patrol the thing nearly shook to pieces and the engine went on fire and seized. By this time I was about 100 feet up and, on the momentum, I was able to climb to about 500 feet. All I could see all round me were houses everywhere in all directions. Then I saw a park, full of kids (Saturday afternoon!) about 100 yards long and just below me. I did the most vicious side-slip ever done in a Spitfire and slowed down to about 100mph and looked to see if the kids had taken the hint. Well, you know what kids are, they just stand and gape. So to cut a long story short I ended up in somebody's front garden having cut the wings off by going through in between a couple of houses. The only casualties were a dog and a couple of chickens. The aeroplane was, of course, a complete write-off except the wireless set which I quickly transported to a place of safety. I drank the traditional cup of tea, refused dozens of cigarettes and offers of drinks and signed a couple of hundred autograph books.

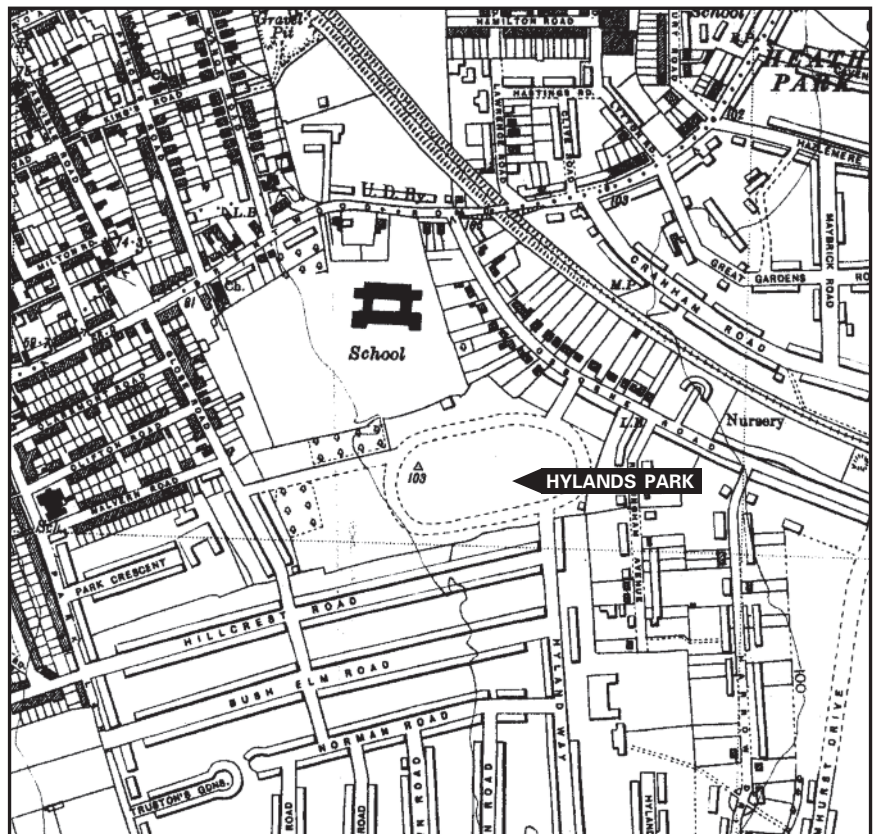
The Home Guard did not quite save me from having my jacket torn to pieces by souvenir collectors!

The greatest surprise was yet to come. The crowd passed around a hat and collected £13.8d for me to buy a new Spitfire with. They are a bit short but every little helps! My Flight Commander suggested that I send it to the *Telegraph*, which I have decided to do.

Yesterday the first of the fan mail arrived. Twenty-one requests for autographs, 26 for souvenirs and 31 for both. The question of autographs was simple enough but the providing of 57 souvenirs was a problem. In the end I got permission to cut up part of one of the wings and everybody seemed satisfied. Here is an extract from one of the letters and one of the few which did not end up with a request: "I do wish to congratulate you on your skilful piloting, your lucky escape and the cheerful way you took it..."

I like the last line. I bet most people would be cheerful in my situation! The writer (a girl) probably thought I was shot down. However, I arrived at the aerodrome festooned with belts of machine gun ammunition and the wireless set on my shoulder.

When I saw the Medical Officer he just said "You again" and offered me a week's leave. I was soft enough not to take it as we are rather short of experienced (ahem!) pilots. However, I took Sunday, Monday and today off to get things squared up.'



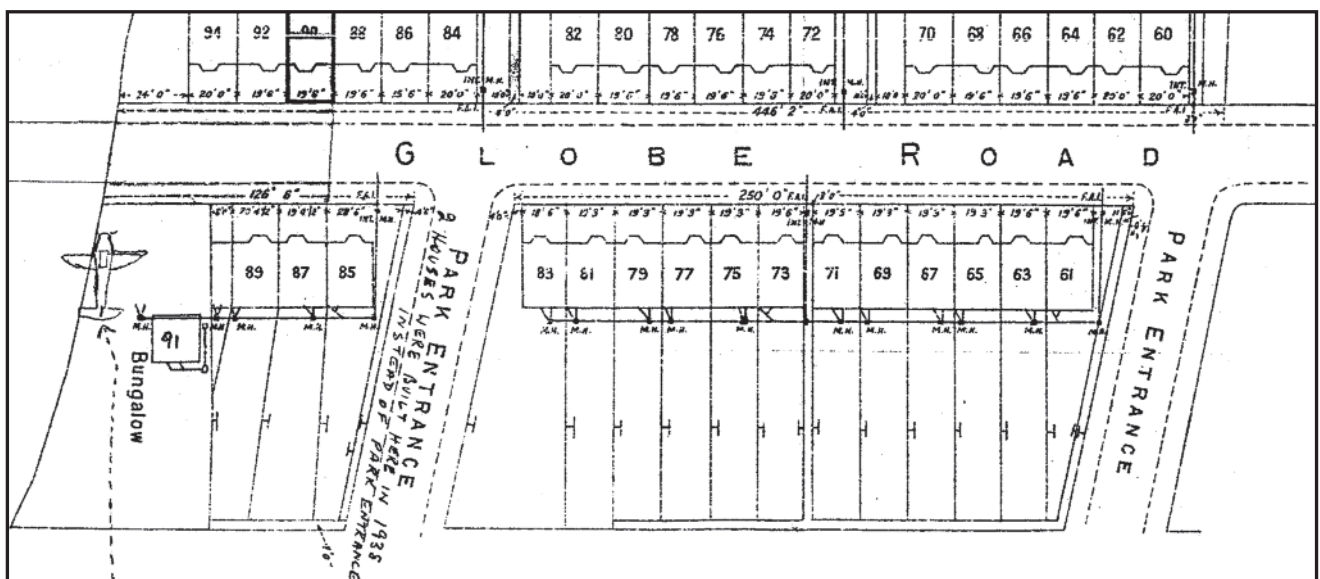
When faced with an engine failure on take-off, pilots are taught not to try to turn back to the airfield as they are certain to lose valuable height while carrying out a 180-degree turn. Instead they are instructed always to try to put down somewhere ahead and in John's case on October 12, that somewhere was Hylands Park in the centre of Romford. This map is the pre-war revision of 1938 although it does not show the new properties which existed at the southern end of Globe Road which borders the western end of the park. The park itself is just under 500 yards long.

John had intended to land in Hylands Park, Romford, Essex, but was forced to overshoot because of the children, the aircraft finally coming to rest in the garden of a bungalow at No. 91 Globe Road. What happened next is best taken up in the words of those who were there. Fourteen-year-old Betty Forbes lived opposite at No. 90:

'On the day that John crashed we heard what sounded like an aircraft engine in distress and then an almighty crashing and

banging. Our thoughts were immediately "One of ours or one of theirs?" My mother and I rushed to the front door just as John was climbing out of his Spitfire and we went to his assistance with other neighbours. He shouted at us in no uncertain terms to stand clear as there was a risk of fire and the Spit was fully armed.

'He worked on the 'plane for some minutes, then reappeared with bandoleers of ammo around his neck and body, put them



As it was a Saturday there were children playing on the swings and roundabout in the centre of the park but John was still

able to pull off a remarkable landing, his Spitfire ending up just short of Globe Road.



down and then returned to his 'plane several more times to make it safe. Only then did he accept a cup of tea from Mrs. Harrison at No. 80 and a blanket from my mother. Mr and Mrs Wooldridge and their daughter, Edna, took John into their home at No. 82 for comfort. I recall that everyone was very excited and asked John what happened and how he came to land by the bungalow. He explained he thought he could manage a wheels down landing in the park, but when he saw the children playing there he had to take avoiding action and crashed through the side of the bungalow.

'To all of us Sergeant John McAdam was a hero and a brilliant pilot. That gap is only about 80 feet wide and yet he managed to steer his stricken aircraft clear of the children and into that gap. Had he skidded any further he would have demolished the houses opposite the bungalow and the loss of life could have been considerable. Eventually, help arrived from Hornchurch aerodrome and we only saw John once more when he came to view the scene with an officer.'

A similar account is given by Mrs Green, then 29 years old and living in nearby Malvern Road:

'He came low over our houses making an awful noise. We all knew he was going to

This picture comes from the files of No. 58 Maintenance Unit. Sergeant McAdam's Spitfire was P9512 but unfortunately the No. 41 Squadron code-letters 'EB' have obliterated all but the 'P'.

crash. He headed for the park but refused to land there because of the children so went through the back garden of the bungalow at No. 91 Globe Road. When he got out do you know what he did? He calmly got out his comb and combed his hair. That always sticks in my mind. If I remember correctly he had very fair hair. What nerve the man had. So brave. We all cheered him and clapped and then someone said we ought to have a collection.

'We all ran home and got some money and passed round his flying helmet to put it in. He kept saying "No, no" but we all insisted! I can see him laughing now. He had a really bright smile. We were all so sorry to learn that he was killed later on. I often wondered if he was still alive as I pass that bungalow several times a week and have thought of him often. My niece, who was 14, remembers him well and she had his autograph. Sadly, over the years she has lost it.'

However, the incident at Globe Road was not the first such crash McAdam had experienced. Once before, on September 7, 1940, he had been shot down after a fierce dog-

fight over Essex when he crash-landed his crippled and burning Spitfire, once again ending up in a garden, this time in Leonard Drive, Rayleigh, Essex.

In remarkable detail he wrote home to his parents about this adventure, describing how the Spitfire had hit the ground tail first, skidded through a couple of walls and a few trees, cartwheeled over twice and finally came to rest upside down with himself trapped inside and unhurt. He told how just as flames took a grip, he had pulled out his revolver to shoot himself because he did not wish to burn to death. At this point, through the smoke and fire, he had glimpsed the figure of a man setting about the cockpit and fuselage with a large axe. Salvation was at hand, and he was dragged clear just as the machine exploded in a fireball.

When she read his letter, John's mother, overcome by emotion, had burst into tears at realisation of the mortal danger her son was in. As she read, her tears cascaded onto the paper and that letter, still bearing its tear stained and smudged ink, is testimony to a mother's anguish.



Left: Looking across the park today towards the far corner where the aircraft came to rest beside the bungalow at No. 91 Globe Road (right). In the foreground stands an example of the compensation culture which has taken hold in Britain over the last ten years. Litigation fever was imported from the United



States in the 1990s when 'no win no fee' agreements with solicitors were first introduced in the summer of 1995. Since then the fear of being sued has led councils to remove the traditional swings and roundabouts from youngsters' play areas to be replaced by passive climbing frames.



Joyce Paul holding a copy of *The East End Then and Now* featuring herself (arrowed) as a 16-year-old survivor of the V1 incident at Plashet Grove in July 1944. (Romford Recorder)

From the Editor . . .

As has been the case ever since we started the magazine back in 1973, we continue to receive a regular stream of letters and photographs from readers all over the world. This alone makes it a pleasure to compile this mosaic of comments, updates and follow-up stories. In recent years we have seen three notable changes in the kind of letters and material we receive.

Firstly, and for very obvious reasons, we are beginning to receive markedly less reactions from 'those who were there'. The war is now nearly six decades behind us, and a great many of the participants, in fact the majority, are no longer among us. Even the youngest soldiers of 1945 are now in their late seventies; those who experienced the war as children are reaching retirement age. Failing health and fading memory are taking their toll, and so it is no wonder that letters containing first-hand accounts are decreasing. Fortunately, many have recorded their recollections in private histories, or told their war stories to relatives, and nowadays we see children and grandchildren supplying us with the accounts left by their forebears.

Secondly, more and more of our readers' reactions now arrive as e-mails rather than as good old paper letters. This has the advantage of speed and greater legibility, and has made the world that much smaller, but it also sometimes creates minor editorial problems. For one thing, we always like to identify a

contributor by his or her full name and give the town or village where he or she is based. However, with e-mails, this information is not always included and sometimes we are left guessing as to who sent a particular reaction and from where.

Thirdly, and associated with this digitisation, more and more people — both authors and readers — nowadays send in photographs in digitalised form, either per e-mail or on photo CDs. With the immense popularity of digital cameras and the easy availability of photo scanners, this is only to be expected but, again, it can create some editorial headaches. In order for us to be able to publish pictures in the magazine, we need them to have a resolution of at least 300 dots per inch (300dpi). However, many of the cheaper digital cameras only produce images at a much lower resolution, very often just 72dpi. Also, many of those scanning pictures at home do not realise they are to adjust the machine to the required resolution. And finally, pictures downloaded from the Internet may look all right on the computer screen but are far below the standards needed for use in printed publications. Thus some of the electronic pictures we get sent cannot be used in the magazine. This is regrettable as many of them are interesting. So, if at all possible, send us your pictures either as good old photographic prints or with a high enough resolution.

To negate our own argument about the decrease of direct eyewitnesses, let us begin this instalment of follow-up stories with an account by someone 'who was there'. On page 457 of *The East End Then and Now* we published a picture of a group of people surveying the wreckage at Plashet Grove in Manor Park after it was hit by a V1 flying bomb in July 1944. A nice background story to this emerged in February 2003 when Mrs Joyce Paul, 75, of Harold Wood came forward with the news that she had recognised herself in the photo. Mrs Wood had obtained a copy of the book to read more about the infamous Kray twins and Jack the Ripper but, leafing through it, was stunned to find a picture of herself as a 16-year-old, standing in the street with a coat over her pyjamas, having a cup of tea with other survivors and overlooking the wreckage of her blasted home. She said: 'I recognised myself as the only blonde one in the photograph although I'm more silver than blond nowadays.' She had survived the blast by hiding with her mother and a friend in the cellar while the walls of their house at 27 Tennyson Avenue, which backed onto Plashet Grove, fell about their ears. 'Lumps fell down onto our heads but we weren't hurt. I was more excited than worried at the time. There was absolutely nothing left of the house except a glass bowl with an egg inside. It was just the way the blast went.'

This editorial is always the appropriate place to admit to one's own goofs and blunders. One that was a real Editor's nightmare occurred with issue 120. On the front cover of that issue we showed a man putting flowers at the graves of the Free French SAS men killed at Sennecey-le-Grand, France, in September 1944 during the 2002 commemoration of that ill-fated action. In the caption on the inside cover we identified him as Lord Jellicoe, patron of the British SAS Regimental Association. I was therefore extremely embarrassed to learn soon after publication that I had given the wrong name, the man in the picture actually being Lord Viscount Slim, the *President* of the SAS Regimental Association. Lord Jellicoe had been present at the same commemoration and he appeared in other photographs, but the mix-up was entirely my mistake. I of course immediately wrote to both gentlemen to apologise for the unfortunate error. In his reply, Lord Jellicoe gracefully saw the humour of the mistake, saying: 'I was in fact delighted that I was described as the layer of flowers on the SAS graves, since Lord Slim looks so very handsome in the picture!'



The real Lord Jellicoe (left) and Lord Viscount Slim (right). (J. P. Garnier)



This mis-captioned photograph shows neither Special Air Service personnel nor Pathfinders on D-Day but paras during a training jump in February 1944! (IWM)

Then David List, our diligent researcher at the Public Record Office in London (since renamed the National Archives), took me to task on the opening photo on page 2 of the Sennecey story, which shows paras exiting from an aircraft through the hole in the floor. Although we had reason to believe that the picture showed SAS paras dropping on D-Day, David sent me a copy of an article he had written for the *BAPLA Journal*, the magazine of the British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies (now defunct), back in 1995 in which he showed that this picture was in fact part of a series taken by Heywood 'Mac' Magee (1900-1980), a staff photographer of *Picture Post*, probably in February 1944 during a training drop at the Parachute Training School at Ringway near Manchester.

David had originally written the story to refute a claim made by the Hulton Deutsch picture agency during the 50th anniversary of D-Day in 1994 that the photo in question showed Private John 'Paddy' O'Mahoney and Lieutenant Bobby de Latour of the 22nd Independent Parachute Company of the 6th Airborne Division during the actual D-Day jump of the British pathfinders. Lieutenant de Latour features in the famous picture taken by Captain Bill Malindine of the AFPU at RAF Harwell of four pathfinder lieutenants synchronising their watches just before take-off to Normandy (see *D-Day Then and Now*, page 222) and the 'green light on!' picture was presented by Hulton Deutsch as showing his and O'Mahoney's subsequent drop a few hours later.

During the war the picture in question had appeared in the June 24, 1944 D-Day edition of *Picture Post* with a caption that indeed identified one of the men at the jumping hole as Lieutenant de Latour. However, on closer research, David found that the photo was part of a series credited to 'Mac' Magee and that other pictures from the same series had already appeared in the March 18, 1944 edition of *Picture Post*. As the accompanying text, written by *Picture Post* feature writer Macdonald Hastings, explained: 'Back in the winter we were working on a story of our paratroops. We took hundreds of pictures on several big training fields. Many of the pictures were stopped by the censor.' A search through RAF records showed that Magee and Hastings had been at No. 1 Parachute Training School Ringway for three days from February 6, 1944, to do a story on paratroops. So there seems little doubt that the jumping hole picture was taken at Ringway in February 1944 and not during D-Day.



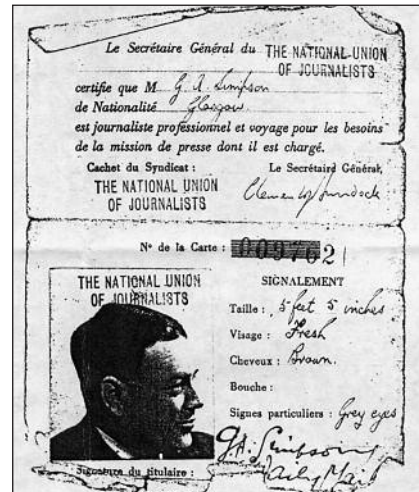
Another D-Day warrior identified. Splashing ashore at St Aubin is Trooper Les Williams, REME, attached to No. 48 Royal Marine Commando. (IWM)

In the same article David referred to another, equally famous D-Day picture, that of the bespectacled Royal Marine commando splashing through the surf at St Aubin-sur-Mer on Juno Beach (see *D-Day Then and Now*, pages 507 and 631). Back in February 1975, Wilfred Sendall, ex-Major Royal Marines and in later life reporter for the *News of the World* and *Daily Express*, had written to the *Sunday Times* to say that he too wore glasses and had been on the beach at St Aubin at H-Hour plus 30 minutes (although without glasses which were safely in his pocket) and had seen the photographer take the picture from the shelter of the sea wall. This led the *News of the World* and *Daily Express* to conclude 19 years later that the commando in the picture was Wilfred Sendall, which was a claim that Sendall himself had never made.

Knowing all this, we were quite interested when Peter Jones of Denbigh in North Wales sent us a copy of a locally produced booklet entitled *Rhyl in the Second World War* by Colin Jones. In this, Mrs Enid Hill of Rosehill Road, Rhyl, is quoted as saying about this photograph: 'Whenever the media use a photograph of the D-Day landings, it is nearly always the same one. It shows my brother Graham Leslie (Les) Williams of Albert Street. He was a welder with the REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) attached to the Royal Marine Commandos. He also saw action in Belgium and Holland. After the war, Les worked for Vickers the plumbers in Rhyl. My other two brothers and sisters were in the forces too and they all survived the war.'

Speaking of photographers and famous pictures, Nick Rowswell who lives in Bourges, France, sent us a nice snippet in connection with the capture of Rudolf Hess (issue 58):

'According to his obituaries, George Simpson was "The Man who Shot Hess" (in the photographic sense). When Hess landed at Eaglesham on May 10, 1941, my grandfather was the first and only press photographer on the scene to get shots of Hess and the wreckage of his aircraft. I suppose nowadays this would be called a world exclusive. My grandfather was chief photographer for the *Daily Mail* in Scotland throughout World War II. He got the Hess exclusive because he knew personally the farm labourer who "greeted" Hess after his landing. Before phoning the authorities or the Duke of Hamilton, the labourer in question telephoned my grandfather, who duly drove down from Glasgow to get the exclusive.'



George Simpson of the *Daily Mail* whose claim to fame is that he photographed Rudolf Hess immediately after his capture.

'This was perhaps the greatest of my grandfather's exploits. He also worked closely with the RAF to develop aerial photography, though up to now, no RAF archive seems to record this.

'I am currently researching a book about my grandfather, but information about him is a bit thin on the ground. He was a key player in Scottish press photography for over 30 years, but none of his photos are "accessible", especially the Hess photos.'

On page 10 of our story on the battle of Arnhem (issue 2) we showed the well-known picture of Generalmajor Friedrich Kussin hanging dead from his bullet-riddled car after he had accidentally run into British paras of 3rd Battalion at the Wolfheze junction just outside Oosterbeek. Twenty-nine years later, using the same picture again in *Operation Market-Garden Then and Now*, page 299, we commented on the fact that the dead general clearly appears to have been scalped Indian-style. We received an interesting reaction to this observation from Glenn C. Schoen from Rockville, Maryland. Glenn was born in Holland but emigrated to the United States in 1983. He is a top specialist on terrorism and counter-terrorism, especially with regard to travel security, having been advisor for numerous institutions and governments, including the US government. Currently he is serving as Director of Analytical Services at TranSecur, Inc., one of the world's leading travel security information firms. He wrote:

'Your work on the two-volume "Market-Garden" books was just fantastic. My dad and grandparents lived through that fight (they lived in Arnhem during the war), and I've been reading and hearing about it for most of my 40 years, the last 21 of them from here in the States, and you unearthed more new detail and insight on that entire affair than most authors combined. You did an enormous service to many people with that work. The only, and I mean only, caveat I had is where you mention that General Kussin might have been scalped, given the way his skin is peeled back in the photo. I've done work on terrorism for the past 18 years, and I can tell you from experience it is possible that one achieves that effect from bullet wounds, especially from a light sub-machine gun wherein two or three bullets hit the same approximate area on an angle in close succession, stripping away tissue. The same effect can be achieved by a small piece of shrapnel. Who knows — it may have been scalping; I'm just mentioning there are other possible explanations.'



Monument to Pfc Robert Cahow of the US 78th Infantry Division in the Hürtgen Forest. 'He rested in an unknown forest grave 56 years until by chance his remains were found and recovered by a German ordnance-sweeping team near this marker', the plaque on the granite memorial reads. 'Robert, we never did or will forget you.' (S. Gerros/C. Mauk)

Our story on the battle of the Hürtgen Forest (issue 71) continues to generate interest. Several readers wrote to inform us about a new memorial in the Kall river valley. In April 2000 German engineers were clearing the forest area at a place known as Ochsenkopf (near the Raffelsbrand road junction south-west of Vossenack) prior to returning it to farmland when they found the remains of an American soldier and, nearby, two German soldiers. The American was a giant of a man, six feet seven inches tall. His dog tags were barely legible, but appeared to belong to someone named Cahon. The remains were shipped to the US Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI) for further research.

As it happened, just the previous year Douglas Cahow, a retired schoolteacher, had

appealed in a veterans newsletter for information on how his brother, Pfc Robert Cahow of the 78th Infantry Division, had died. The 78th Division's historian, Colonel John McLean, saw the letter a week before someone showed him a news story saying the remains of an American soldier had been found in the Hürtgen Forest. With his assistance, it did not take the CILHI experts long to identify the remains as those of Pfc Robert Cahow, Army Number 36206366, who had served in the Company K, 3rd Battalion, 311th Infantry Regiment of the 78th Division.

The eldest of eight brothers from Clear Lake, a small farming community in Wisconsin, Cahow had originally been drafted to serve as an MP, guarding POWs in America. Wanting to serve in a more active manner, he

volunteered for front-line duty and was transferred to the 311th Infantry. With his six feet seven inches he stood out from his comrades in Company K. On December 13, 1944, the 78th Division went into action in the Hürtgenwald in another attempt to capture the Roer River dams (the offensive was cut short by the German Ardennes offensive which began three days later). Company K was assigned to execute a diversionary assault on a bunker in the forest. Most of the soldiers were new to combat. Anti-personnel mines and enemy fire killed and wounded many. Cahow and several other men volunteered to recover the wounded. One of them, Cahow's friend Harvey Jorgensen, recalls:

'We made our way slowly through the shattered undergrowth, snow falling steadily. We were spaced about 50-75 yards apart so as not to alert the Germans, who were all around in trenches and log emplacements. At once the silence was shattered by a detonation. Robert had hit a booby trap.'

The resulting fire from the alarmed Germans threw the survivors back. The confusion that followed meant that Jorgensen and his comrades could not locate Cahow. He was reported missing in action. Apparently, the Germans later found and buried him near the bunker that had been his unit's objective. Cahow's body lay undiscovered for 56 years until workers building a logging road found his remains after a metal detector located grenades he wore on a bandolier.

On June 2, 2001, Memorial Day weekend, Cahow was buried with full military honours in his hometown of Clear Lake, Wisconsin, near the dairy farm where he grew up. At least two-thirds of the town's population of 942 attended the service, as did numerous 78th Division WW II veterans. 'Taps' was played by Cahow's nephew and namesake, Pfc Robert Cahow, Wisconsin National Guard, and his casket was carried to the grave by a contingent of today's 3rd Battalion, 311th Regiment, 78th Division. Colonel McLean, the division historian, served as the Officer in Charge of the funeral detail.

On June 4, two days after the burial in the States, American and German officials dedicated the memorial in the Hürtgen Forest. The ceremony was attended by Cahow's brother Douglas and 78th Division veterans. About 50 feet from the granite marker is a big pile of rocks and bits of concrete with a wooden cross marking the place where Cahow was found. The spot is not very far from the memorial marker for the two GIs and one German that were found here in 1976 (see issue 72, page 9).



The actual spot where Cahow was found is marked by a pile of stones and a wooden cross. (S. Gerros/C. Mauk)

Right: Unveiling of the new Cockleshell Heroes memorial in Bordeaux by HRH The Duke of Kent and the Deputy Mayor of Bordeaux, M. Hugues Martin, during the 60th anniversary of the raid on December 12, 2002. The memorial stands on the Quai des Chartrons, near where the German ships were berthed. (Amanda Gard, RN)

Our story of the Cockleshell Heroes Raid (issue 121), although still fairly recent, has already produced several follow-ups. First, and most sadly, ex-Marine Bill Sparks DSM, the last surviving member of the ten Royal Marines who carried out the daring attack on shipping in Bordeaux harbour in December 1942, died on November 30, 2002, aged 80 — just two weeks after our story had come off the press and another two weeks short of the 60th anniversary celebrations of the raid to be held in France and the UK. He was given full military honours at his funeral in the village of Alfriston in East Sussex.

Major Mark Bentinck, Royal Marines Corps Historian and one of the authors of our story, sent us a report on the 60th anniversary of the raid:

'The main celebrations took place in Bordeaux on the exact date of the raid, December 12. HMS *Southampton* and RFA *Sir Percifale* were present with Royal Marines from 45 Commando together with a Royal Marines band. HRH The Duke of Kent, Countess Mountbatten and the commander of 3 Commando Brigade RM, Brigadier J. B. Dutton, also attended. At Chateau Magnol, site of the German naval headquarters, wreaths were laid at the foot of the bullet-pitted wall where Sergeant Wallace and Marine Ewart were executed. In a less sombre ceremony, a handsome memorial was unveiled at the spot on the quayside in Bordeaux where the German ships were attacked.

'Royal Marines cadets from the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook, walked the Frankton Trail and took part in the ceremonies. At the other end of the age scale were veterans from the original RM Boom Patrol Detachment, escorted by serving and past members, some of whom also walked the 100 miles of the Trail. Lower-key ceremonies took place on December 13 at St Georges-de-Didonne (at the mouth of the Gironde where there is a memorial to the raid) and Ruffec, where a plaque was unveiled at the front of the café where Major Hasler and Marine Sparks first managed to contact the French Résistance during their escape.

'On July 12, 2003, further commemorative plaques were unveiled: one at Pointe de Grave near the site where Sergeant Wallace and Marine Ewart were captured by the Germans and another at St Vivien-du-Médoc (Pointe aux Oiseaux) on the bank of the Gironde where Hasler and Sparks with Laver and Mills established their first hide on their way up the river. Additional plaques will be sited at significant points on the Trail.'

A final follow-up occurred on November 1, 2003, when a blue heritage plaque commemorating the life of Marine Sparks was unveiled at his former home, 47 Poundfield Road, Loughton, Essex, as a lasting tribute to this remarkable warrior. Present at the ceremony were Sparks' sons Frank and Harry, daughter Gill and other relatives; Loughton town councillors Chris Pond and Roger Pearce; Peter Tipler representing the Royal Naval Association, and many other friends.

Right: Dedication of the plaque in memory of Marine Bill Sparks at his former home at 47 Poundfield Road in Loughton, Essex, on November 1, 2003. The round plaque can be seen below the window. (Guardian Newspapers)



Inauguration of the Operation 'Frankton' plaque at the Café des Sports in Ruffec on December 13, 2002. Picture sent in by Keith Thomas (a subscriber from issue 1) who lives at Le Bourg, only some ten kilometres from Ruffec.





Margaret Harris holding a portrait of her uncle, Flight Sergeant Andrew Jack, the only survivor of the aircraft crash that killed the Duke of Kent and the only one who knew the truth behind it. (Liverpool Daily Post & Echo)

A new light was recently shed on the aircraft crash which caused the death of HRH The Duke of Kent in August 1942 (issue 37). As David Smith described in the article, the cause of the Sunderland crashing into the hillside in Caithness in north-east Scotland was never resolved, the wartime Court of Inquiry failing to find any explanation for the accident, merely concluding that the aircraft had flown on a track other than in the flight plan and at too low an altitude to clear the rising ground, and expressing the opinion that the responsibility for this mistake in air-manship lay with the Sunderland's captain, Flight Lieutenant Frank Goyen of No. 228 Squadron.

In November 2003, Mrs Margaret Harris, 69, from Prestatyn in North Wales came forward with a secret her family had kept for many years. Mrs Harris is the niece of former Flight Sergeant Andrew Jack, the tail gunner of the Sunderland and the only survivor of the crash. He later told his brother, Mrs Harris' father, in confidence how he had dragged the Duke and his fellow crewmen from the blazing wreckage, suffering terrible burns as he fought to save them. As he did so, he had found the Duke himself in the pilot's seat, slumped at the controls, not Flight Lieutenant Goyen who eventually got the blame.

However, after he had been rescued, Sergeant Jack was ordered by the RAF not to reveal any details concerning the accident in order to protect the reputation of the Duke of Kent. The Duke was said to be a drug user, alcoholic and bisexual, and Flight Sergeant Jack believed an unnamed passenger aboard the fateful flight was really the Duke's boyfriend. These awkward facts led the Court of Inquiry to formulate its conclusions in such a way that the blame fell on Flight Lieutenant Goyen.

It was this injustice which haunted Flight Sergeant Jack for the rest of his life. As a result of his terrible burns, he had to undergo many months of plastic surgery (with both

the Duke's mother, Queen Mary, and his widow, Princess Marina, visiting him in hospital), but more painful than the many operations was the feeling that he had let his mate down and was powerless to correct the injustice, having been sworn to secrecy. He died in 1976 without ever having publicly disclosed his knowledge.

Already before take-off, Jack had had misgivings about the flight which had already been delayed because of bad weather. 'The situation hadn't improved much when the Duke and his three associates got tired of waiting and decided they should set off', explained Mrs Harris. 'All three had been drinking, and even though the crew had not, the Duke decided to fly the aircraft with fatal consequences.'

As Mrs Harris said in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*: 'It's time the truth was told. If only to clear the pilot's name. Why should the Royal Family be allowed to keep such secrets at the expense of ordinary people?'

The identity of the alleged unnamed extra passenger remains unknown. All press reports about Mrs Harris' disclosure simply state that the number of people killed in the crash was 15, although the accepted number has always been 14. As the pictures in issue 37 show, the memorial at the crash site lists only 14 names: the Duke, ten men from No. 228 Squadron (eight of the Sunderland's normal nine-man crew, the squadron commander, plus one other) and two members of the Duke's party: his private secretary, Lieutenant John Lowther; and Pilot Officer The Hon. Michael Strutt.

Another mystery involving a famous personality and an aircraft loss is that of American bandleader Glenn Miller who disappeared during a flight to France on December 16, 1944 (issue 2 and *Glenn Miller in Britain Then and Now*). In October 2002 we received an interesting e-mail from George Duncan in Perth, Western Australia, webmaster of 'Lesser Known Facts of WWII' (www.iinet.net.au/~gduncan) who informed us: 'A visitor to my page wrote me some time ago saying that his father, Sergeant Edward McCulloch, drove Glenn Miller to the airfield on that day.' George sent us the account written by the son, Brian C. McCullough, and in due course we made contact with the

latter's father, Edward, who lives in Ocean-side, California. His story is described in this account written by his son:

'The story of Glenn Miller's disappearance began for me at the age of six, when my family went to see the movie *The Glenn Miller Story*. My dad leaned over to my mother and said, "They don't have that quite right."

'He was referring to the scene where Glenn Miller leaves Twinwood airfield in Bedfordshire, England. When we left the theater, I asked my father what he had meant with his comment.

'He told me that he was Glenn Miller's driver the day Miller disappeared. He added that the vehicle was a staff car, not a Jeep and that he was a staff sergeant, not an officer. Later, I was to learn the personal significance of the latter part of the answer to my question.

'My mother said she was going to write to Hollywood to set the record straight. "They should have found him — Hollywood isn't that far from here." We were living in San Lorenzo, California. Forty-nine years would pass for my dad's role in the story of that day in December 1944, when the Miller legend was born, to become public.

'Staff Sergeant Edward H. McCulloch was the driver of the Commanding Officer of the Eighth Air Force Service Command, which was headquartered at Milton Ernest Hall in Bedfordshire, England. Colonel James Early detailed my dad to drive Major Miller and a warrant officer from the Temporary Officers Quarters at Milton Ernest Hall to the airfield for the flight to France.

'My father approached Miller the evening before to tell him that he would be his driver the next day. Miller had been chatting with several enlisted men when my dad introduced himself.

'Major Miller asked my dad if he would take him to the NCO Club. My father responded, "With all due respect Sir, you are an officer." To this Miller replied that he preferred the company of enlisted men and wanted to enjoy his evening. My dad remembers Miller saying "some of the officers can be pretty stuffy."

'After walking with the major to the NCO Club and introducing him to some of the other non-commissioned officers, my dad



Sergeant Edward McCulloch, who drove Glenn Miller to Twinwood Farm airfield prior to his last flight — pictured in 1944 (left) and as he is today (right).



Norman McMillan, right, who sailed with the Glenn Miller Band on the *Queen Elizabeth* in 1944, enjoying a bit of nostalgia at the marvellously supported Glenn Miller Festival at Twinwood Farm, August 2003.

says he left, as he was on duty. He was billeted in a manor house several miles away in Pavenham Bury with Colonel Early, two other officers and another non-commissioned officer.

'The time of Miller's flight had been scheduled to take advantage of available daylight. My father believes the flight to have been laid on specifically for Miller possibly by Early, perhaps at the request of other senior officers.

'Colonel Early told my dad that Glenn Miller's pilot was a 25-mission man waiting to go home. Recently my dad said "he probably volunteered to fly Miller as much out of boredom as anything else. After all, Paris is not very far from that part of England. It should have been an easy flight there and back." The irony of the event was not lost on my father.

'While the weather had been bad for several days, it had improved by the time they got to the airfield. In my dad's recollection: "There was an overcast, but it was above minimums at Twinwood. On the other hand, I remember thinking that I was glad not to be piloting the plane. I knew how quickly the fog could drop and how dense it was in England. As a driver, I had to contend with it all the time."

'After picking-up the major and the warrant officer at Milton Ernest Hall, McCulloch drove directly to the airfield at Twinwood, several miles away. As he remembers it today, as well as in 1953, the plane was there when they entered the airfield.

'They drove up to the plane. My dad got out and opened the door for the major and got Miller's flight bag from the trunk of the colonel's staff car. "It was a Dodge — we would never have used a Jeep, especially an open one like the one in the movie, in England at that time of year."

'Handing the major his bag, my dad remembers saying a simple "Have a good flight." Miller and the pilot boarded the plane. My dad did not see another passenger, although he agrees that another passenger could have already been on the plane. Both the car and the plane left the airfield at the same time.

'Several hours later, the military police and/or intelligence arrived at Milton Ernest Hall. Colonel Early later told my father that they had collected a footlocker and some other personal effects left behind by Major Miller. The colonel ordered him not to mention Miller's most recent stay at Milton Ernest.

'He said nothing until he got home. There is not a mention in any of the letters or V-Mail to my mother — she saved all of them. There is, however, confirmation of his presence at Milton Ernest on December 13, 1944 in them.

'As for his impression of Glenn Miller during those last hours? My dad says that he seemed like a regular guy. He wore his billed hat without the wire brim, which was the way with many of the wartime US Army Air Corps personnel in England.

'We may never know what became of Glenn Miller, but I know and now you do, whom Glenn Miller spent some of his last hours with — my dad. The uniform jacket he wore that day will be on permanent loan, along with his pictures of Pavenham Bury and Milton Ernest Hall, at the Twinwood Control Tower museum, near where my dad spent a year and a half of his life and Glenn Miller left to become a legend.'

There is no doubt that the aircraft carried another passenger as we know that Lieutenant Colonel Baessel was also lost on the flight. The unnamed warrant officer men-

tioned by McCulloch must be Don Haynes, Miller's executive officer, but the big problem is that in an interview with Andy Williams in 1958, Haynes said that he drove Miller to Twinwood that day to see him off. Even if we accept that he meant that he 'accompanied' Miller rather than actually be at the wheel, it would still mean there were not two, but three persons in the car with driver McCulloch.

Meanwhile, Miller's music continues to attract crowds. In August 2003, a Glenn Miller Festival was held at Twinwood Farm airfield over the weekend of the 23rd/24th featuring among others the Bill Baker Big Band from Holland and the Glenn Miller (UK) Orchestra conducted by Ray McVay. Since the control tower and associated buildings were purchased by David and Liz Wooding (see issue 117), Twinwood has been remarkably transformed, and the festival drew hundreds of Glenn Miller fans, one of whom was Norman McMillan who had sailed to Britain with the Miller band on the liner *Queen Elizabeth* in June 1944. He had come over from Nainamo, British Columbia, in Canada and was given a warm welcome by the crowd. We sent Norman a copy of our Glenn Miller book and in his thanking letter he wrote:

'The book is a real treasure. I can hardly wait to read the book in detail and examine those photos through a magnifying glass to look for some of the guys in the band that I got to know when we brought them over in 1944. I'm not going to say I will recognise them all after all these years, but I do have the satisfaction of knowing that I met most of them during those afternoon practice sessions in the "after lounge" of the *Queen Elizabeth*. Also, the great memory that I have of the guitarist playing my new guitar. He was the first one to give me a real professional appraisal of the instrument I had just purchased in New York. After hearing him play it I knew I had a "winner".'

Then on Sunday, December 14, 2003, a memorial and thanksgiving service was held at the airfield from where Miller departed on his last fateful flight. Everyone braved a biting wind for a tribute parade by the 101st Airborne Division Re-enactment Group as the flags were lowered to half-mast, before moving into the hangar for the service which was conducted by Captain Stewart Shaw of the Church Army. Period entertainment was provided before and after the service to a packed audience.



The glamorous Spitfires entertaining the crowd during the Glenn Miller memorial and thanksgiving service at Twinwood Farm on December 14, 2003.

Datum: 4.6.1946

Ausgestellt durch: Gemeinde Kaufering.

Grabmeldung

Nationalität des Toten: Engländer

Familienname: unbekannt.	Registriert, Gemeinde: Kaufering.
Vorname: unbekannt.	Reich: Landkreis/Land: Lech.
Neugrab: unbekannt.	Provinz: Oberbay. Staat: Bayern.
Treppentafel: Luftst. 7	ist Grabgrab-Begegnung:
Grabnummer: unbekannt.	Eintragung: 7. 1. 1946.
Erkennungsmärkte (volle Aufschrift): unbekannt.	von: (höchste größere Ortsteil)
Geburtsort: unbekannt.	(Wenn Stille der Grablage, Stille der Stille)
Geburtsort, Staat: unbekannt.	Reinigungsarbeiten / Grabarbeiten: Kaufering.
Todesort: unbekannt.	Grabmal / Grabmal (mit einem geschützten Grabstein)
Todesort, Staat: Kaufering, (Oberbay.)	St. 7. 1. 1946.
Todesursache: gefallener Pilot, Besatzung / verstorben, St. 7. 1. 1946.	Anzahl der Toten im Grabmal: ungefähr 7.
der Krieger / Krieger	Umgeben: 7. 1. 1946.
Schleichen: mit / ohne (Schleichen: mit / ohne)	Grab-Nr. 7. 1. 1946.
Ausstellung der Angehörigen: unbekannt.	Umgebungsprotokoll: ausgeführt durch:
Angehörige beauftragt am:	Weitere Angaben, z. B. Identifizierung, Jahresschein von: unbekannt, Type und Nummer des Grabsteins aus: unbekannt, Angabe der Belegung (auch: Belegung der Belegung):
Bei Abfertigung: gestellt am: 7. 1. 1946.	
Abfertigung: abgelehnt am:	

*) Abfertigung: gestellt am: 7. 1. 1946.

Left: Follow-up to the Warburton saga. Figuring prominently in the discussion that erupted after Warburton's funeral in 2002 was this 1946 grave report (Grabmeldung) of 'about seven' unknown British airmen buried in a mass grave at Kaufering. Although there is nothing in this document that connects this grave with Warburton's crash at Egling in April 1944, some saw it as evidence that body parts of Warburton had been buried at Kaufering. The discussion was somewhat cluttered by inadequate translations of the document on the British side. The word 'Engländer' in German can mean both singular and plural. Whether in this case it refers to one or more Englishmen becomes perfectly clear from the entry under 'Number of Persons in Grave' which says 'ungefähr 7' – 'approximately seven'. However, some Britons wrongly translated this line as 'Number of Grave' and thought the entry to read 'Grave No. 7'. Thus the mistaken belief could come about that the report refers to just one unknown Englishman.



Above: May 2003 saw the 60th anniversary of the Dambuster Raid (issue 3). A party led by No. 617 Squadron historian Jim Shortland travelled to Germany to commemorate the attack. During the night of May 16/17, a ceremony was held on the Möhne Dam at exactly the same hour as Guy Gibson had started his attack 60 years before: 1228 hours. The moon was in the same position, albeit somewhat obscured by clouds. Here, Peter Shanks awaits the moment to lay the wreath. (H. Euler)

Following our recent story on photo-reconnaissance ace Wing Commander Adrian Warburton (issue 121), in which we reported on the discovery of the crash site of his Lightning F5B and the recovery of his remains at Egling-an-der-Paar in southern Germany in August 2002, and his subsequent burial in the British Military Cemetery at Dürnbach in May 2003, aviation historian Roy Nesbit fluttered the doves by publishing an article titled 'Where is Warburton's Body' in the November issue of *Aero-plane*.

Basing himself on an article by our authors Hermann Laage and Manfred Rödel in the June issue of the German aviation magazine *Jet & Prop*, Nesbit claimed that parts of Warburton's body might possibly have already been recovered by the Germans in April 1944 and might well have been buried in the St Johannes Bapt. Church at the town of Kaufering, nine miles south-west of Egling, in a plot that already contained the bodies of seven men from a Halifax, which had crashed during a raid on Munich on the night of September 6/7, 1943. To prove his theory, he had found a new witness, a farmer from Kaufering named Herr Heiss, who as a youngster in the early part of the war had dug graves at the Kaufering cemetery and remembered the burial of 'the pilot from Egling' — although not from personal observation, as by 1944 he had been recruited into the Wehrmacht. The plot at Kaufering was cleared by the Allies after the war and the bodies of the Halifax men were reburied at Dürnbach. The inference of all this being that remains of Warburton today may in fact lie in two different graves.

Although it would not be the first time that the remains of a war casualty are found to lie in two separate burial places — we have come across a few instances ourselves in the past 30 years — there are several problems with Laage and Rödel's and hence Nesbit's theory about Warburton.

Its main documentary basis are two German official documents, one from 1944 and one from 1946. The first — which we reproduced on page 53 of our story — is a crash report (as opposed to a burial report), which states only that the pilot that crashed at Egling on April 12, 1944, is unknown and

presumed to be an American. Yet, Laage and Rödel in their caption in *Jet & Prop* conclude that body parts of the unknown pilot were buried by the Wehrmacht in 1944 — which is not what the document says.

The second document is a Grabmeldung (grave report) dated June 4, 1946, of a wartime mass grave of 'about seven' unknown Allied airmen at Kaufering. There is nothing in the document that links this grave with April 1944, or Egling or Warburton. Yet, in their *Jet & Prop* caption Laage and Rödel say that it is 'most likely' that body parts of Warburton were buried in this grave. We queried this with our two German authors and they admit that this part of their theory is pure speculation — there is in fact nothing to connect Warburton with the Kaufering plot. Also, there is no known document verifying the transfer of an unknown airman from Kaufering to a British war cemetery. Thus, the available documentary evidence does not support the theory about the two graves.

There is also a problem with the eyewitness reports. All of these were taken down in recent years, i.e. long after the event. Among them are several accounts of people who were at the crash site in April 1944 which state that body parts of the pilot (alternatively described as 'a leg', or 'an arm') were found. However, that is a far as the testimony goes. Nobody says anything about whether these body parts were taken away, and — if so — where, or where they were buried. Then there are accounts of people who were at the crash site about a year later, in April 1945 (when an American team made a superficial inspection of the site), who state that 'a boot with a bone' or 'a piece of skull with yellow hair' was seen in the crash crater, but that nothing was taken away. Mr Nesbit deserves credit for tracking down Herr Heiss, but oral statements made 60 years after the event about the alleged burial of 'the pilot from Egling' of course can never carry the same weight as official documents made up at the time.

Frank Dorber, the driving force behind the search for Warburton, made every effort to clarify if the body or body parts of Warburton had ever been recovered. To prove or refute it, he consulted local and regional police and

church archives in Germany, and American archives and organisations, to see if there was any record of recovery and/or burial of body parts after the Egling crash, either in April 1944 or during reconstruction work in the 1950s. He could find none. He also attempted American archives to find out whether the American search team that was at Egling in April 1945 had recovered any body parts then — but could find no evidence of that either. Frank Dorber for one feels sure that nothing of Warburton's remains was taken away before the recovery in 2002.

As to the Kaufering plot, the Staatsarchiv München had references to 'approximately seven' unknown British airmen (this would be the Halifax crew referred to by Nesbit) and four US airmen, one of the latter unknown and the other three casualties of the same aircraft loss in September 1944. The CWGC had a record for one identified and five unknown servicemen interred in the Kaufering plot, all of whom had died on September 7, 1943 (the same Halifax crew). The five unknowns of this crew were later all identified and re-interred in Dürnbach on September 5, 1947. None of the documentation for Kaufering made any link with Egling or April 1944.

Our own position in such discussions is always a practical one. We like to look at things dispassionately and with common sense. As said, there are cases where war dead are known to be buried in more than one grave. However, in the case of Warburton, unless one can positively pinpoint and prove where the earlier grave was or is, one should accept that his grave is now at Dürnbach.



Marker at Peenemünde's Test Stand VII: 'Launching site of the A4 rockets'.

Warburton was the RAF's most famous photo-reconnaissance pilot. It was therefore a fitting follow-up that in January 2004 The Aerial Reconnaissance Archives (TARA) at Keele University launched its website www.evidenceincamera.co.uk.

The Archives, formerly known as the Air Photo Library (see issue 7), were created in 1962 when 40,000 boxes containing 5.5 million aerial photos from the Allied Central Interpretation Unit at Medmenham were transferred to Keele University's Department of Geography. For decades, the ACIU archive was mainly used by the European bomb-disposal industry as a means of locating unexploded bombs. The time-consuming and complicated process of searching the archive meant few others used the resource. The programme to create the website was started in 2002 with the digitisation of all the card-index systems and sortie plots used to search the archive, a job that has now been completed. Unfortunately the system crashed as soon as it went on line when 6,000 requests were received in the first minute! It will be some time before the software is improved to cope with the demand. By means of its internet newsletter *Evidence in Camera*, Keele will keep the public informed about the progress of its digitisation programme.



Neatly laid bare are these foundation stones for one of the two prefabricated V1 launching ramps at the former Luftwaffe airfield at Peenemünde.

James Robinson from Mickleham near Dorking in Surrey sent us an impression of his latest visit to Peenemünde, the development and test site for the German V-weapons on the Baltic coast (issue 74):

'So much has changed since magazine No. 74 came out in November 1991. Now that East and West Germany are one, it is possible to go anywhere, no fear of military police, you won't get shot. Test Stand VII is getting ever more overgrown, so very sad, the bright spot however is that somebody has erected a monument marking the very spot of the 'birthplace of space'. A new museum has opened in the old power station and is an absolute must — one really needs two days to see everything.

'Peenemünde itself slips under a vast cover of trees, brambles, etc, and it is difficult to establish what went on and where. Then the gem, absolutely marvellous: find your way into the test stand nearest to the old liquid oxygen plant — it's all there, it's all untouched, nothing has been destroyed. The cobblestone road has a wonderful steel-blue colour, you can spend an entire day just walking round and round. Of course, the Germans don't like you being there, warnings of UXBs, etc — but if you look carefully at the trees, then you'll see that they are all in lines, they have been planted, so it's up to whoever wants to go.'

In connection with V-weapons, John Kenney from Ongar in Essex wrote to us in May 2003 to report on an amazing find:

'Whilst out for a bike ride a couple of weeks ago to Osea Island near Maldon, Essex, cycling over the causeway I saw something not 20 yards from the edge of the path that I took to be an old bell, then probably an old boiler. But then something aroused my interest even further: it was those rims around the circumference, and then it struck me. Oh my God, it's the venturi/mixing chamber of a V2.

'I nearly fell off my bike. I said to my wife and daughter: "Look, it's part of an old V2 rocket" — to which they gave the classic response "Oh, really dear, how interesting". No hum.

'But anyway I thought I would send you the photos just to see what you made of them. The tide at Osea Island completely covers the causeway so if you plan to have a look then visit the BBC weather/marine/tides/Osea Island website for the time of the low tides.'

Although it is evidently difficult to pinpoint the particular V2 from which this combustion unit came from, John thinks it may be the one that fell at Goldhanger at 3 p.m. on January 16, 1945 — recorded as Big Ben incident No. 544 (see *The Blitz Then and Now*, Volume 3, page 510).



The engine test stand near the liquid oxygen plant. All Peenemünde pictures were taken by James Robinson in October 2002.



Amazing discovery near Osea Island: the combustion unit of a V2. (J. Kenney)

We are always pleased to receive updates from readers on sites previously covered in the magazine. Richard Stoodley from Egerton near Ashford in Kent was able to make what he calls 'an all-too-brief visit' to Ascension Island, the volcanic island in the South Atlantic that was so vital for Allied communications during the war (issue 32), in October 2002. He reports:

'The guns at Fort Bedford overlooking Georgetown are kept painted and well looked after. The two 7-inch rifled muzzle loaders date from around 1870 and are an interesting transition between pure muzzle loaders, firing a round ball, and proper breach loaders. The two 5.5-inch guns are dated 1918, and apparently were removed from the ill-fated HMS *Hood* in the 1930s. The museum in the Marine fort in Georgetown has expanded considerably and they have found a third 5.5-inch barrel — perhaps a spare. The former American HQ building on Command Hill has now been restored and appears to be used as accommodation — complete with washing lines!



Two 5.5-inch guns at Ford Bedford, Georgetown, Ascension Island, pictured by Richard Stoodley in October 2002.



Stalag Luft III revisited. Left: The beginning of the path marking the course of Tunnel 'Harry' used for the escape, as pictured by Chris Cooper in September 2003.



Right: Chris inspecting the line of the tunnel where it crosses the camp perimeter road. The dip in the road surface, supposedly caused by subsidence, is visible off to the left.

Chris Cooper from Malton in North Yorkshire visited the site of the Stalag Luft III prisoner of war camp near Sagan in present-day Poland, site of the famous Great Escape (issue 87), in September 2003. He reports: 'Someone has cut the turf above the tunnel,

so its path can be seen. I also photographed the dip in the road surface, allegedly tunnel subsidence. If the turf cutter has got his facts right, the dip is too far from the tunnel to be so. Also the water supply tank has been cleared out.'



The camp's water tank, cleared-out and cleaned. (C. Cooper)

With reference to the Great Escape, in April 2000 there occurred a small media hype in the UK over a five-page MI5 document released by the Public Record Office which was said to reveal that Hitler had personally ordered the captured escapees to be shot. Generalmajor Adolf Westhof, the senior army officer in charge of prisoner welfare in the camps, told MI5 interrogators after the war how, in the immediate wake of the escape, he and a colleague had been summoned to Berlin by Generalfeldmarschall Wilhelm Keitel, the OKW Chief-of-Staff. Keitel had been very nervous, telling them: 'Gentlemen, this is a bad business. This morning, Göring reproached me in the presence of Himmler for having let some more POWs escape. Gentlemen, these escapes must stop. We must set an example. We shall take very severe measures. The men who escaped will be shot, probably the majority are dead already.'

As he told to his interrogators, Westhof and his colleague protested that the Geneva Convention forbade such action, but Keitel's response made clear it was an order from Hitler, saying: 'I don't care a damn. We discussed it in the Führer's presence and it cannot be altered.' According to Westhof: 'The Führer himself always took a hand in these affairs when officers escaped. We were faced with a fait accompli.'

Interesting though this newly released testimony may be, one has to remember that putting the responsibility for all war crimes on Hitler personally was a favourite tactic for most captured German generals after the war. Certainly, the Allied war crime investigators were never satisfied with such excuses. As we already described in our story, after the war they traced, tried and executed 21 of the Gestapo personnel responsible for the slaughter.

Michael Ginns, one of our Channel Islands contacts, informed us of a memorial to one of the victims of the Great Escape that exists on Jersey. Free French pilot Sous-Lieutenant Bernard Schneidhauer of No. 131 Squadron crash-landed on Jersey on November 18, 1942, after a successful bombing raid to Normandy. Following his capture he was interned in Stalag Luft III. On the night of March 24/25, 1944, he was one of the 76 POWs who took part in the mass break-out from the camp. He was recaptured at Saarbrücken on March 26 and, along with escape partner Squadron Leader Roger Bushell, shot by the Gestapo on the 29th. The memorial to him was unveiled at the old gates of the Diélament Manor at Trinity, Jersey — just 300 yards from the spot where he crash-landed — on September 17, 1999.



Dedication of the memorial to the memory of Sous-Lieutenant Bernard Schneidhauer, one of the 50 victims from the Stalag Luft III mass escape, at Trinity, Jersey, in September 1999. (R. Currie)



Herbie Woodend (1943–2003).

In issue 100 (page 14) Winston Ramsey, our Editor-in-Chief, commented on the transfer of the Royal Small Arms Pattern Room firearms collection from Enfield (where it was located when we first reported on it in issue 2) to a beautiful new building at Nottingham. Following the purchase of Royal Ordnance by British Aerospace, the collection was transferred to its new home in 1988 under its long-time curator, Herbie Woodend.

There was nothing Herbie did not know about firearms and he made the Pattern Room into what is probably the world's most renowned collection of firearms. Herbie acquired weapons from a variety of official sources, deals with museums, private collections, dealers, and from battlefields around the globe.

The new facilities of the Enfield building at Nottingham justly reflected the huge effort Herbie had devoted to building up the collection which he showed us many times over the years since our first visit to Enfield in 1963.

Thus it was with much sadness — and a huge sense of loss — that we learned of his untimely death, so soon after his retirement in July 2003. Herbie was 60 and had spent night-on 40 years with the Pattern Room. Even worse, Herbie lived to see the brand new building demolished!

In July 2001, British Aerospace gave just seven months notice of the closure of the Nottingham Royal Ordnance Plc factory. There was no question that the high-security

Enfield building could remain intact in the middle of the site when developed commercially so the entire collection had to be packed away for an expected 3-5 years in storage while alternative secure premises were found. Fortunately for the future of the collection the Trustees of the Royal Armouries at Leeds came to the rescue of what we would at least call a priceless asset and agreed to take the collection complete. Amazingly this huge relocation operation, entailing the physical move of over 12,500 firearms and associated objects, was planned and carried out by the newly appointed Custodian Richard Jones and his small staff in eight months, ably assisted by the professional packing team from Gearsons Ltd.

The modern element of the Pattern Room collection and three remaining members of staff relocated to the Royal Armouries in Leeds although the restricted space meant that some of the more historic items had to go into long-term secure storage, while a temporary home was also found for the larger items at Fort Nelson in Portsmouth which houses the Royal Armouries' artillery collection.

The good news is that plans for a new facility to house both the MOD Pattern Room collection and that of the Royal Armouries were brought forward and the new building is well on its way to completion and it is hoped that the Pattern Room collection will be back together again by this time next year.

On completion of the new building the Pattern Room collection will be 'gifted' to the Royal Armouries forming a National Firearms Collection which will arguably be the finest in the world and of international importance.

Back in September 1980, Winston received a letter from Miss Diana Payne. In it she offered an article for publication saying that 'as far as I know, no one else has described what it felt like doing the "donkey work" for Ultra'. After much research, a year later Winston took Diana on a tour of the places where she had been stationed during the war as one of the 2,000 Wrens employed in the British code-breaking organisation centred on Bletchley Park.

Diana was nervous at appearing in print as she felt she might still be subject to the Official Secrets Act that she had signed at the time, and at one stage she was going to adopt a pen-name — she fancied 'Hollywood'! Her story appeared in 1982 (issue 37) and it did much to bring a spotlight on the hitherto unsung work of the Wrens.

Over the following years we kept in touch with Diana and her adventures (see issue 50, page 5, and issue 72, page 47) and in August 2000 took her to see the movie *Enigma* (see issue 119, page 54). At the time Diana was suffering from cancer but she was an incredibly brave woman living on her own as she had never married. In May 2003 she telephoned us for the last time . . . to say goodbye. Diana died at her home on June 1, 2003 — she was 83.



Diana Payne (1920–2003).

A colleague ex-Wren, Marian S. McFaddin of Ipswich, Massachusetts, in the US sent us the following obituary:

'Rarely does one have an opportunity to count as a friend someone so special and interesting as Diana Payne. Sadly we never met. Our friendship, nurtured through letters and trans-Atlantic phone calls between two former Wrens — Diana and I, a displaced Britisher — began years after the end of WW II when recollections of those fateful years were already growing dimmer. I came to know of and admire Diana through published articles such as "My Secret Life with Ultra". She was the first and most effective spokeswoman for the Women's Royal Naval Service whose vital work in breaking the Enigma code helped shape history and whose contribution was finally recognised after 30 years of silence. Diana was an avid follower of global affairs and many of our lively discussions centred on US and UK politics. She was a gentle and generous woman, always interesting and interested. She will be missed.'

In our last 'From the Editor' (issue 119) we reported on the case of the Enigma encoding machine stolen from the Bletchley Park museum in April 2000 and on the subsequent trial of antique dealer Dennis Yates in September-October 2001, which led to him being sentenced to ten months imprisonment. We were therefore quite surprised to in March 2003 receive a letter from Mr Yates:

'It has been brought to my attention that an article has been published in issue 119 of your magazine which contains a major inaccuracy. I was the person involved in the negotiations with Bletchley Park for the return of Enigma G312. Had you taken the time to check the circumstances surrounding my plea of guilty to the charge of handling the stolen Enigma then it would have become clear that I was not convicted of, as you quaintly put it, "fencing" the machine and you could have therefore avoided the potential of an action for libel being taken against you. It was accepted by the prosecution that at no time did I take any part in either its theft or subsequent disposal and that had it not been for my intervention the machine would have been lost to the nation forever. Further the reason that I had to plead guilty was because I had committed a technical offence by virtue of the fact that even though at all times I intended that the machine was to be returned to its rightful owner I retained it because of the delay in negotiations for an unreasonable length of time and was therefore guilty of handling even though my intentions were not dishonest. In view of the foregoing it should be clear that I was not convicted of the offence of disposing of stolen goods which is what the term used in the article, "fencing", generally alludes to.'

In my reply to Mr Yates I said: 'I understand that you, as the one primarily affected by the whole trial, would want the precise legal wording of the verdict to be used at all times. If you wish, I could publish your letter to us in our next 'From the Editor' to explain your point of view.'

Mr Yates agreed saying: 'I accept your offer to print the contents of my letter as at least an attempt to put forward my side of the story if only in part and hope that this is an end to the matter.'



Ken Small (1930–2004).

Ken Small, the Devon man who was instrumental in raising the Sherman DD amphibious tank from Start Bay in May 1984, has died. The tank had foundered as it drove off a tank landing craft during one of the pre-D-Day training exercises at Slapton Sands in April 1944 (issue 44). Ken's dedicated quest to recover the vehicle was described in issue 45. The tank was dedicated as a memorial at Torcross, at the southern end of the former invasion training area, in November 1984 (issue 50, page 9). Ken's subsequent one-man crusade to set up a special memorial to the casualties of the D-Day training Exercise 'Tiger', which resulted in the deaths of over 600 men on the Devon coast in April 1944, came to fruition with the dedication at Torcross in November 1987 (see issue 66, page 34). Ken died on March 15, 2004, just a month before the 60th anniversary of Exercise 'Tiger'.



Relics of another Sherman, this one in North Yorkshire. 'Can anyone tell me what the remains of a Sherman tank are doing washed out of the soft clay at Skerlington Sands near Skipsea (just south of Bridlington)', writes Mr B. Hodgson from Bradbury, who came across the wreckage while on a holiday outing.

On January 25, 2003, the subscription TV History Channel broadcast a documentary claiming to solve the mystery of 'The Man Who Never Was' (issue 54) — although Roger Morgan had already established the identity in 1996 with his discovery of a Top Secret document at the Public Record Office giving the name, Glyndwr Michael (issue 94). The hypothesis included in the programme was that a casualty from HMS *Dasher*, the escort carrier that sank after an explosion off the Scottish coast in 1943 (see issue 83), was switched for the body already chosen by Ewen Montagu. The casualty in question was named as 24-year-old Able Seaman Tom Martin.

John and Noreen Steele published their book on the sinking of the escort carrier in 1997 (*They Were Never Told — the Tragedy of HMS Dasher*). The 2002 edition of the book, re-titled *The Secrets of HMS Dasher*, included an extra chapter propounding Colin Gibson's latest theory about the use of the corpse of one of the casualties from the sinking. Colin, who like Roger had spent many years trying to identify 'Major Martin', put forward his own candidate in 1989, Emlyn Howells (see issue 64), but, following publication of the *Dasher* story, then latched onto the possibility that a body washed ashore from the sinking escort carrier could have been used. Although such a casualty would have the advantage of having genuinely died of drowning, one weakness in this theory is that the persona of 'Major Martin' had already been built up by Montagu around a mature officer who was an expert in amphibious landings, and an ID card had been prepared using a photo which resembled the facial features of the corpse already in cold storage. Switching at the last moment to a young, fresh-faced seaman some 12 years his junior would not have been a risk worth taking.

And in any case, following publication of our issue 94, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission had the identity confirmed by the Ministry of Defence and the CWGC then had the name of Glyndwr Michael inscribed on the headstone in Huelva Roman Catholic cemetery in Spain (see issue 100, page 62, and the Commission's website at www.cwgr.org).



Colin Gibson's latest candidate for The Man Who Never Was: Able Seaman Tom Martin, who perished in HMS *Darter* on March 27, 1943, age 24.



The real Major William Martin, Royal Marines — whose identity was used to create The Man who Never Was — here pictured as a lieutenant in 1932 (P. Martin)

In connection with The Man Who Never Was, we were very interested to receive information on the 'real' Major William Martin — and this from no other than his son, Peter Martin, who lives in Espoo in Finland. Peter sent us a detailed biography of his father and also explained how the latter's involuntary role in 'Mincemeat' caught up with the family in later life.

William Hynd Norrie Martin, known to all as Norrie Martin, was born on October 14, 1908, at Broughty Ferry in Scotland. Commissioned into the Royal Marines in 1927, he became a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm in 1932, and subsequently served on the aircraft carriers *Furious*, *Courageous*, *Glorious* and *Hermes*. By war's outbreak he was one of the FAA's most experienced pilots.

On September 4, 1939, he was posted to HMS *Ark Royal* as a flight commander in No. 810 (Swordfish) Squadron, seeing action in many Norwegian and Atlantic operations, and being forced to ditch his aircraft on one occasion. In May 1940 he became CO of No. 821 (Swordfish) Squadron based at RNAS Hatston in the Orkney Islands. In February 1941 he was appointed CO of No. 814 (Swordfish) Squadron on the *Hermes*, with which he patrolled the Indian Ocean until June when the aircraft carrier was transferred to the Persian Gulf to support Army operations in Iraq. While in the Gulf Captain Martin was promoted to Temporary Major, RM. From November 1941 to February 1942, while *Hermes* was being refitted, Martin and No. 814 Squadron were land-based in Ceylon. Shortly after her return to operations, on April 9, 1942, *Hermes* was sunk by Japanese aircraft off Ceylon with heavy casualties, but Major Martin and most of his squadron were not affected, having again been disembarked on the island just a few weeks earlier to act as a shore-based striking force.

With his ship gone and the remnants of No. 814 Squadron gradually being absorbed into other squadrons, Martin became FAA Liaison Officer to the AOC Ceylon, Air Marshal John D'Albiac, but in June 1942 he was ordered to the United States to become Assistant Superintendent British Air Training at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, in charge of training and converting British aircrews to Avenger and Vought Corsair aircraft. He held this position from November 1942 to December 1944.



On the day Commander Martin retired from the Royal Navy, October 11, 1958, he met Lord Mountbatten at the British Embassy in Washington. The earl greeted Martin with the words 'You were a Marine, I believe?' In view of the fact that both men had played a vital role in Operation 'Mincemeat' (Martin had his name borrowed and Mountbatten had had his signature used in one of the fake letters that were produced as part of the deception plan), it was a fitting end to a remarkable career.

Thus, at the time of the 'Mincemeat' operation, the real Major Martin was in America. On June 4, 1943, as part of the deception plan, *The Times* announced the death of Captain (Acting Major) W. Martin. Many of Norrie Martin's friends and service colleagues, who had not seen or talked to him recently and did not know that he had been posted to America, assumed that he must have died in the sinking of *Hermes*. Martin himself knew nothing about this obituary until he got back to England in January 1945, when several of his friends said in surprise: 'But we thought you were dead'. As there had been another officer by the name of Martin in *Hermes*, he dismissed it as an administrative error and gave it no further thought.

After the war, Martin served in various Navy postings. In 1945 his first marriage, to Dorothy 'Robin' (née Moss), who had given him two sons, Michael and Peter, ended in divorce and in 1946 he married again, to Penelope 'Penny' (née Burra), who gave him another son, Charles. It was only in 1953, when Ewen Montagu's book came out, that he first learned of his wartime role in 'Mincemeat'. His son Michael sent him a copy and for the first time he put two and two together. Intrigued to know why his name had been used, he wrote to Montagu, who replied that it was because there were a great many Martins on the Navy list at the time (albeit only one Temporary Major with the initial W) and they had needed a common name but not too obviously ordinary. Montagu also sent him two copies of his book, one signed 'To Major William Martin, Royal Marines' and one clean copy that he asked Martin to sign and return to him as a memento. Martin autographed it 'From the man who was, in 1943, Major William Martin, Royal Marines' and duly returned it.

Martin retired from the Navy in 1958 and moved to America, settling in Virginia. He died on December 10, 1988, 45 years after his fake obituary had appeared in *The Times*. His ashes were scattered off the coast of Virginia in early 1989 (in a way a fulfilment of his wish to be placed in the Gulf Stream to eventually arrive in his country of birth), so unlike the fictitious Major Martin who is buried at Huelva in Spain, the real Major Martin has no grave on land.

For many years Peter Martin was quite convinced that his father must have known right from the beginning that his identity was going to be used, refusing to accept the latter's protests that he had been totally ignorant about it until 1953. Although his father would never be drawn into a detailed discussion of the matter, the fact that he had been posted to America so soon after the sinking of *Hermes*; the fact that he had transferred from the Royal Marines to the Royal Navy in June 1944, thus disappearing as a Major, RM, and reappearing as a Commander, RN; and the fact that he went to live in the States after the war, all made it look to Peter as if his father had willingly co-operated in a vanishing operation and the creation of a new identity. It was really not until 1989 when James Rusbringer, ex-Naval Intelligence officer and 'Mincemeat' investigator, told him that his father's identity had indeed been borrowed without his knowledge, that Peter let himself be convinced otherwise. As Rusbringer explained, Montagu had always made it plain that he could not tell the real Major Martin about his role in the deception until the story accidentally came out in 1953. Had it not, Norrie Martin would probably have continued to believe it was a wartime administrative error, which was of course exactly what Montagu had originally intended.



It is not generally known that New Zealand was fortified during the war, so we were interested to receive a letter from Trevor Meachen from Mission Bay, Auckland, informing us of some of the relics in his area. He writes:

'While New Zealand was, of course, not invaded or attacked during the war, the threat of Japanese invasion was very real and the Battle of the Coral Sea to the north, the attacks on Darwin in Australia and submarine excursions into Sidney Harbour — all covered in your issues — were very real and close to home! Furthermore our many thousands of kilometres of coastline made defence almost impossible. Nevertheless, on our East Coast in particular token defences were built and in some cases are still visible today. The West Coast was seen as too wild for any landings.

'The Japanese did in fact print military occupation currency in readiness for their conquest of Australia. The American 2nd Marine Division was billeted at McKay's Crossing Camp near Wellington prior to Operation "Galvanic" — the landings at Betio, Tarawa, Gilbert Islands (issue 15).

'I can recall as a teenage child a test-firing of a 6-inch coastal gun located on the top of Bluff Hill in the city of Napier, Hawke Bay, in 1944. The blast shattered every window in the surrounding residential area and the gun was therefore never fired again! Many beaches had barbed-wire entanglements and slit trenches. All major ports had active coastal artillery units. Many emplacements and embrasures can still easily be seen, for example at Auckland (North Head and Narrow Neck), Wellington (Fort Dorset) and Lyttleton (South Island and Godley Head).

'The embrasures viewed from the main road around the Auckland city waterfront are no more than one half mile from my residence and are passed by many thousands of motorists every day — probably unaware of their historical significance. Our city council keep them free of graffiti for aesthetic reasons. The pillbox in Hawke Bay is one of a number built during the war along the bay waterfront. About 500 yards apart, because of their stout construction, some have been buried as being too costly to demolish, but there are at least four or five still visible and untouched.'

Fortifications from World War II still to be found in New Zealand: gun platforms and operations rooms along the Tamaki Drive waterfront at Auckland.



Reinforced concrete pillbox at Napier Foreshore, Hawke Bay.



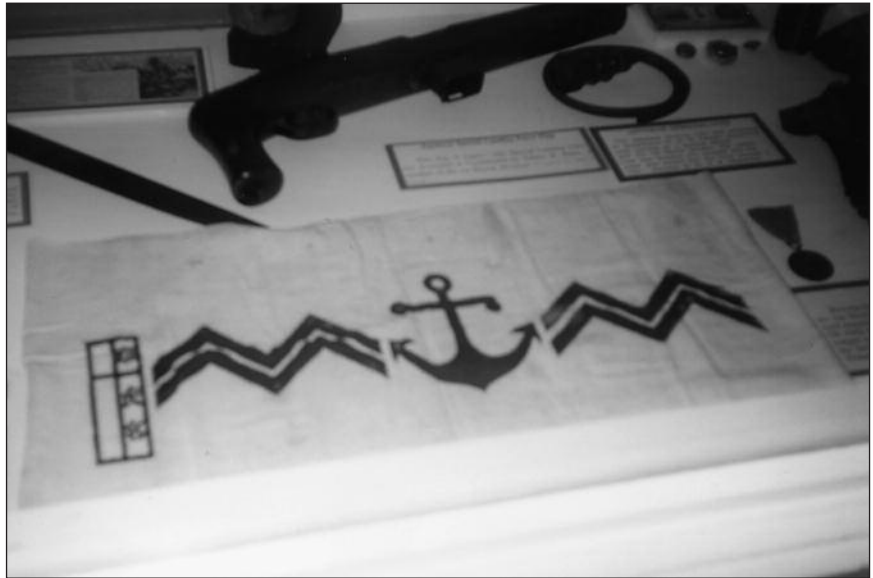
Coastal gun embrasures at Bastion Point. Auckland city lies in the background. All pictures taken by Trevor Meachen.



An interesting relic from the July 1944 battle of Guam (issue 116). In October 2002 two visitors to the island's War in the Pacific National Historical Park found a GI canteen that had been exposed by heavy rainfall. Its engraving 'Kali-Sioux Reservation, Kali-Black Hills, South Dakota' led the Park Museum staff to believe that the water bottle may have belonged to one of the few but famed Sioux Indians code-talkers, whose tribal language was so difficult to understand that they could safely relay wireless messages in the clear without the risk of any Japanese being able to know what was being said. Engraved on the reverse side of the canteen are a few symbols and the inscription 'Smokey Diaz' which is believed to be the soldier's name. Unable to locate any record of a Smokey Diaz having served in Guam, the museum made a public appeal for help, so far without result.

At the end of our story on Guadalcanal (issue 108) we described the recent ethnic unrest and associated violence on the island which threatened to make any exploration of the former battlefields, certainly outside the island's capital city Honiara, an uncertain and dangerous affair. Since the outbursts of hostility between indigenous islanders and newcomers from Malaita and other neighbouring islands began in 1998, several hundred islanders have been killed and some 20,000 Malaitans been forced to flee from the island. In 2000, under Australian pressure, a peace treaty was concluded between the two sides, by then known as the Isatabu Freedom Movement and the Malaita Eagle Force, but murder, kidnappings, arson and extortion by armed gangs and militias continued as before. In early July 2003, the powerless Solomon Islands' government requested, and its parliament agreed to, an intervention by an international peace-keeping force to put an end to the anarchy.

Thus it was that, 59 years after the US 1st Marine Division came ashore on Red Beach, another amphibious landing occurred on the very same historic beach. On July 24, landing craft from an Australian naval support ship began offloading troops, vehicles and equipment there. Earlier that day, RAAF Hercules aircraft touched down at historic Henderson Field international airport outside Honiara, carrying more soldiers, policemen, civilian personnel and equipment. In all, a force of some 2,000 soldiers and 300 policemen from Australia, New Zealand and other Pacific states (Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea and Samoa) were brought in.



A nice set of relics of the Guadalcanal battle (issue 108) is exhibited at the US Marine Corps Museum at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, DC: the unit flag of the Japanese Ichiki Force — the outfit that suffered such terrible losses in the battle at the Ilu river on the night of August 20/21, 1942 — and (in the top right corner of the showcase) the watch and two uniform buttons taken from the dead body of the force's commander, Colonel Kiyono Ichiki. Picture sent in by Jim Kloos of Cleveland, Ohio. (The US Marine Corps is currently setting up an entirely new National Museum and Heritage Center at Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia.)

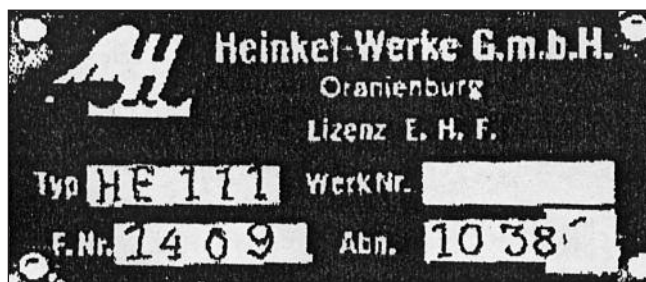
The military and police forces quickly began the task of restoring law and order while the civilian officials took over the running of the island's Finance and Justice Departments and state prisons. In August, the most infamous of the rebel warlords, 32-year-old ex-policeman and founder of the Isatabu Freedom Movement Harold Keke, hailed as a messiah by his followers but accused of the murder of hundreds of people, surrendered to the Australians. Since then, it appears peace has returned to the island, although it will certainly take some time before international tourism to the island has recovered from this nasty period.

Meanwhile, a proposal by a Japanese consultant group in June 2003 to rename Guadalcanal's Henderson Field airport after Japan's national flower — the chrysanthemum — angered many American veterans. The consultants had been hired by the Solomon Islands' government to undertake repairs to

Henderson's runway and terminal. They suggested that in order to boost tourism and development of the island a more contemporary and recognisable name was needed for the airport, which is frequented by Japanese tourists. In a campaign led by the US Marine Raider Association, more than 8,700 marines and supporters signed a petition to the Solomons' government protesting the name change, which they argued is 'revisionist history' dishonouring Americans who fought and died for the pivotal airfield. Despite the assurance from the Solomon Prime Minister Allan Kemakeza that Henderson Field would not be renamed, in September 2003 the Solomon Minister of Communication, Aviation and Meteorology, Daniel Fa'afunua, announced the field would from now on be known as Honiara International Airport-Henderson Field. The hyphenated name was clearly meant as a compromise and most petitioners accepted it as a half-victory.



Australian army troops and vehicles disembarking on historic Red Beach in Guadalcanal, July 2003. (AP)



Manufacturers plate attributed to the Heinkel 111 that crash-landed at Humble, Scotland, on October 28, 1939 — the first German aircraft to come down in Britain.



The plate removed from the starboard tailplane of the Humble Heinkel. Assuming the Fabr.Nr. 1403 is in fact a badly stamped 1409, both plates originate from the same aircraft.

In July 2002 we received an interesting letter from Justin Woodhouse from Brookmans Park in Hertfordshire: 'I am sending you a picture of an item I was given some 20 years ago in the hope that you can shed some light on what, where, how, etc. The item is obviously a manufacturers plate from a Heinkel He 111, a label attached suggests it was taken from an aircraft shot down near Biggin Hill on August 14, 1940, although scratched in the back is February 1, 1940, Scotland. I don't know where to start in confirming any story as to who shot the aircraft down, which squadron they and it belonged to, etc. My father was a Spitfire pilot with the Second Tactical Air Force in 1944-45 and he couldn't help with identification. I've researched myself at the Kent local records office but to no avail. I would be very grateful if you could point me in the right direction to find out more.'

We put Mr Woodhouse's query to Peter Cornwell, our expert on crashed aircraft of that period, and he replied: 'The relic held by Justin Woodhouse is self-evidently a component plate from a He 111 manufactured at Oranienburg in October 1938. In terms of identifying which aircraft it came from — impossible but I much prefer the scratched details on the back of the item to those on the label attached. No He 111s down in the UK match either the date or location given, but something tells me this may well have come from the He 111 down at Humble on October 28, 1939 — the first German aircraft down in the UK during World War II, so a very interesting memento. Compare this to the plate held by Alex Imrie (*The Blitz Then and Now*, Volume 1, page 44) and consider the intriguing possibility that the 1403 is in fact a badly struck 1409? Also, I warrant the inspection stamp bottom right on the Woodhouse plate reads 48 with the upper arms of an H? If he cares to accept this attribution it would never be challenged.'

Mr Woodhouse replied: 'Thank you very much for your help. It would appear the plate is from the first German aircraft shot down over the UK, that which crashed at Humble, Scotland. Closer inspection of the plate shown on page 44 of *The Blitz*, and comparison with the numbers on my plate shows Mr Cornwall's theory on the 3 being poorly struck to be beyond reasonable doubt. Unfortunately this means the information on page 44 [i.e. the maker's number 1403] is incorrect but the new information gives a manufacture date of October 1938 to the aircraft.'

In a later letter Mr Woodhouse added: 'Who would have thought that something I was given 20 years ago would turn out to be of such importance. The detective work undertaken by Peter Cornwell in identifying the true number of the Humble Heinkel was no less than brilliant. Needless to say as a collector of memorabilia and owner of the plate I am extremely pleased with the outcome. It only remains for me to thank you and Peter for your invaluable help and assure you that the new Humble Heinkel plate has a good home.'



On September 15, 2003, a plaque was unveiled at Staplehurst railway station in Kent in memory of Belgian fighter pilot Georges Doutrepont of No. 299 Squadron, RAF, who died when his Hurricane N2537 crashed into the station booking office on September 15, 1940 (see *Battle of Britain Then and Now*, page 451-452). The plaque also remembers 18-year-old booking clerk Charles Ashdown who was killed when the aircraft struck his office and exploded. The event was organised by Staplehurst man Edward Sergison (right, holding the Hurricane print) who had arranged for Pilot Officer Doutrepont's son, Eric (centre), and his two granddaughters, Judith and Arella, to travel from Brussels to attend. (E. McManus)



In November 2002, during an informal ceremony at our Church House office, Winston Ramsey presented 'General Patton' (formerly known as George Kimmins), the founder of the George S. Patton Appreciation Society, with a portrait of his historic namesake. The painting by the late George Campbell (see issue 119, page 40) shows Patton as a four-star general in late 1945, recalling the scene of his Rhine crossing earlier that year. For his present-day copycat, it may symbolise the many days he spends masquerading as himself!



Left: We thought it a real pity when the Sherman at Beffe in the Belgian Ardennes, which we showed on the cover of issue 4, was removed from the ditch where it had lain since the war and put on a concrete plinth beside the village church in 1984



(see issue 50, page 1). Right: Hans Kruijtzter from Berlicum in the Netherlands visited Beffe in January 2004 and sent us this nice comparison matching the angle of the photograph we took back in 1973.

We would like to end this review of follow-ups with a truly amazing event that occurred in late February 2004 when a team of divers raised the 27-ton communications tower of the German pocket battleship *Admiral Graf Spee* (issue 40) from the bottom of the River Plate (Río de la Plata) outside the port capital of Montevideo in Uruguay, more than 64 years after her captain had scuttled the ship in December 1939 to avoid being sunk by a British naval force. The raising of the tower, complete with its embryonic radar antenna (the first ever to be installed on a warship), was the first success of a project that aims to

bring to the surface as many pieces as possible of the famous ship to put it on display in Montevideo. Once restored, the vessel is expected to become a big tourist attraction. The recovery operation is a private effort that could take three years or more and will cost millions of pounds. Initial costs are being financed by the Uruguayan businessman Alfredo Etchegaray.

The 15-person team undertaking the work, led by Uruguayan salvage specialist Héctor Bado, includes Uruguayans, Argentines, Germans and Americans and is expected to grow as the project takes shape. The wreck

lies in pieces just eight metres (26 feet) below the waters, but determining its exact state and condition is difficult because of the bad visibility in the muddy water. Work on salvaging the first section began on February 5, but was delayed by high winds and choppy waters on the broad waterway that separates Uruguay from Argentina, and weeks of failed attempts followed before the command tower could be brought up. Now the effort to retrieve the other pieces of the boat will begin. It promises to be a long and complicated project and we will monitor its progress with interest.



The communications tower of the *Admiral Graf Spee* emerges from the waters of the River Plate estuary. (Associated Press)

